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STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

Vol. XXXV. No. 890. [Incorporating THE ATHENÆUM] SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 1948 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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LET'S KEEP OUR HEADS

MANY people, including Ministers of the Crown, who kept their heads admirably in the last war, now speak and act as if they were panic-stricken. The press and radio make little effort to explain the real situation to the British public, which usually behaves sensibly in the face of danger it understands, but which cannot behave sensibly if it is subject to delusions. To-day the picture presented is of a repetition of the situation of 1938. Because something violent and terrible has happened in Czechoslovakia, therefore it is assumed that we must do exactly what we did after Munich. People go about talking as if we were on the edge of an inevitable war and as if the danger were again simply military aggression by a European Power. They assume that Britain has the same role to play again, but with the difference that we are this time assured of solid American support from the outset. Neither assumption is valid.

To begin with, the real danger is that the class struggle will turn into a world war. The class war, however, will not be decided by a weapon as indiscriminate as the atom bomb; indeed, the general destruction and disintegration created by a new world war might, as the Communist Manifesto of a hundred years ago remarked, result in "the common ruin of both the contending classes." Unless we understand that what has happened in Czechoslovakia is not that a few Communists, helped by Russia, have seized the State, but that the majority of Czech workers have become Communists, have repudiated the Western form of democracy and substituted totalitarian Socialism, we shall understand nothing. As Mr. Crossman, who has just visited Prague, points out on another page, events in Prague have not changed the balance of power because the aggression which Czechs of all political persuasions have always feared is German, not Russian.

The next delusion is that we have an American guarantee. America is far from having made up its mind. Soldiers and high executives in Washington who wanted a preventive war in 1946 would already have dropped atom bombs on Russia if they had not known that the result would be the immediate occupation of the whole of Europe by the Soviet Union, coupled with revolutionary movements in many parts of the world. They had neither the soldiers nor the aircraft nor public opinion to back them in such an enterprise. Their problem is still unsolved. Even if they succeed in persuading the United States to accept conscription, which is far from certain, they are still in the dilemma that "victory" in the sense of defeating and occupying the Soviet Union seems an impossible objective.

America and Russia are now fully engaged in political warfare. The target at the moment is the Italian elections. As a move in the game, the request to Russia to repudiate the Trieste settlement and pass Trieste back to Italy is an ingenious stroke. If the request is refused, Togliatti loses votes. For the Russians to agree to the demand would outrage Yugoslavia. Tito has therefore riposted, rather lamely, with a counter-proposal. The mixture of threats and promises from the Western Powers may win the election for de Gasperi. If it does so, clericalism will maintain its hold in Italy until another opportunity arises for the Socialists and Communists to make another bid for power, or until we do something to help the Italians to deal with their economic problem. The Left is unlikely to try any *coup* in the near future, because in the present American mood the result would probably be to turn Italy into another Greece.

The cold war between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. has now become tepid, if not warm. We are right to put much of the blame on the Kremlin, since Russia is a monolithic Power, while there are many elements in the Western Powers which would have supported the Socialist side of the struggle if Russia had believed that the class struggle could have been solved by any other than totalitarian methods. By, in effect, declaring war on the whole middle-class, Russia ensured that almost total hostility in middle-class countries which her propaganda has (wrongly) declared from the outset to exist. But the fact that Russia and America are now preparing a total war does not mean that Britain and the smaller countries of the world must necessarily surrender their independence and tag along behind every American move.

The idea of a union of Western European Powers, which has long been advocated in this paper, is illusory and dangerous if it is only a military alliance with the U.S.A. Its role in that case would be to put up a resistance to Russia until such time as America was prepared for the fantastic task of "liberation." Moreover, dollar aid under E.R.P. would be a trap, not aid at all, if it was supplied as wartime lend-lease and we were not permitted to extend that trade with Eastern Europe which the Paris Conference on Marshall aid rightly assumed to be essential for all Western Europe. Nor does American aid compel Britain to undertake the task of policing all those areas on the vast periphery of the Soviet Union where the United States has not at present troops or aircraft. On the contrary, the role of Britain and Western Europe should be to strive for that economic reconstruction which would make Communism unattractive to Western workers, and, by building a satisfactory and independent Social Democratic bloc, to do what it can to mitigate the American-Soviet struggle and try to achieve a position as a cool-headed third party between the rival fanaticisms of Washington and Moscow. At present our Ministers seem quite unable to face the revolutionary change in our attitude to economic planning and national sovereignty involved in this enterprise.

If the threatened war comes, one of the leading American generals said not long ago that while London and most of Britain would be quickly destroyed, Britain would remain useful as an aircraft carrier for American bombers: they would still be able to use the excellent aerodromes built by Americans in East Anglia. This would be our fate if war came now. It need not be our fate if, during the two or three years in which war remains unlikely because the technical preparations have not been made, we create an economic and social union of Western Europe which does not identify itself with the policy of either of the great antagonists but maintains, in spite of all risks, its faith in democracy and its struggle for Socialism.

The Control of Berlin

Since no Power or group of Powers can claim a monopoly in the waging of political warfare, the Anglo-American decision to launch an offensive on the Trieste front was taken, we presume, with full recognition of the probability of counter-offensives elsewhere. The obvious sector for a Russian counter-attack was Berlin; and it is equally obvious that, if the Soviet Union decides that toughness must be matched with toughness, the Western Powers may be placed in a position of acute difficulty. Russian intentions are not yet clear. Having protested that, by refusing to render in the Allied Control Council any account of actions recently taken in Bizonia, the Western Powers had "brought to a standstill" the agreement for quadripartite control of Germany, Marshal Sokolovsky and his colleagues walked out of the Council's meeting last Saturday. Since then, the various committees of the Allied Kommandatura which supervise the municipal administration of Berlin have continued to function; but, at the instance of the Russian chairmen, all meetings of the Control Council's committees have been indefinitely postponed. Does this mean that Moscow will shortly proceed to issue a formal denunciation of quadripartite control? And, if so, will the next step be to render the position of the Western Allies in Berlin untenable? Juridically the Four-Power occupation of Berlin does not rest on the city's status as the seat of the Control Council. It is the outcome of an agreement reached between the Powers during the war. But, though General Clay has declared that "we came into Berlin by right, and we have every intention of staying," it would be impossible for the Western Powers to feed or hold on to their sectors in the city of the Russians withdrew the limited transit facilities which they have so far conceded between Bizonia and Berlin. Indeed, we believe that the necessity under these circumstances of evacuating Berlin is fully recognised by the British Government. It was always evident, when the breakdown of the Foreign Ministers' Conference led to the virtual partitioning of Germany, that the prestige of Berlin could be exploited by the Soviet Union if it were made the seat of a German administration claiming authority as the provisional government of the whole Reich. Recent developments in the Russian Zone suggest that such a move by Moscow may be imminent. The meeting last week of the Peoples' Congress set up a Peoples' Council and a Praesidium, which may well be the nucleus of an Eastern German Government; and if, as seems to be the case, the Council is to include representatives of the Socialist Unity Party in the Western Zones, a serious rival to the "shadow government" in Frankfurt may be established.

The Americans and Partition

Once again a Partition plan for Palestine has been first adopted and then abandoned by a Great Power, harassed by fears of war. In 1939 the Chamberlain Government, which had first accepted the Report of the Peel Commission, abandoned it in an attempt to keep the Arabs friendly in the event of war with the Axis. Nine years later the Americans, having backed Partition in the Assembly, have gone back on their decision in a frantic effort to win the support of the Arabs in the "cold war" against Russia. The Jews have learnt to their cost that the U.S.A., despite its six million Jewish voters, is a no more reliable ally than Great Britain when paper promises are measured against strategic interests. Standard Oil and the Service Departments have proved more effective pressure pumps than the Jewish vote, which is probably written off as going to Wallace in any case. Mr. Bevin can congratulate himself on a major diplomatic success in persuading Mr. Marshall to accept his "realistic" policy. But is it really realistic? Mr. Marshall, returning far too late to the lines laid down by the Anglo-American Report of 1946, recommends a Uno trusteeship. To be administered by whom? In the present mood of the British people it is unlikely that Mr. Bevin, even if he wanted to, could accept the job for Britain. He has repeatedly said that he will co-operate only in a solution acceptable to both sides. Trusteeship is acceptable to neither, and would bring with it all the problems which made him declare the Mandate unworkable. Will the Americans then assume responsibility? We find this hard to believe. Mr. Marshall's decision is nothing more than a stalling device, designed to kill Partition and to leave any final decision to another Special Assembly. But this calculation leaves out the Russians, who are still maintaining their support for the Partition plan and taking the opportunity to expose the double-dealing of the Anglo-Saxon Powers. It looks, therefore, as though the immediate result of the American *volte face* will be to increase violence by both sides in Palestine and to make the British withdrawal still more difficult. The Jews now have nothing to lose by going ahead with the establishment of their State, while it is legitimised by the Uno decision. The Arabs, whose violence for the second time has reaped such a rich harvest, will now feel that they have not only British but American approval for their campaign. Mr. Marshall has made chaos certain in Palestine.

European Socialists and Western Union

Muddle and mystery have marked the London Conference of European Socialists. The delay in granting visas to the representatives of the Czech and Polish Social Democrat Parties appears to have been a deliberate attempt to prevent them stating their case before sentence was passed on them. The holding of the Conference behind locked doors gave rise to speculations which were hardly justified by the statement published at the end of the discussions. The form of the resolution outlawing co-operation with the Communist Party had the inevitable effect of excluding the Czech Social Democrats. The Poles are given another chance to disentangle themselves—a chance the Conference appears to have assumed they will not take, since they are not invited to the Paris Conference on Marshall Aid on April 25th. The Nenni Socialists, who were allowed the same opportunity as the Poles, showed their gratitude by walking out of the Conference. Thus Transport House firmly fixes the Iron Curtain in its place and severs communications with all Social Democrat Parties in the East, including the Finns, who have so far not put a foot wrong, even by British Labour Party standards. The result of such a move can only be to heighten tension, and to those living contacts which might have helped Eastern Socialists in their struggle for political independence. On the subject of Western Union the Conference was signally confused. Although apparently satisfied that there were no strings attached to Marshall Aid, they hastened to add that Western Union must be saved from the hands of reactionary politicians reaching out to grab it. Democratic Socialism must be the basis for the Union, but at the same time the conference recognised that it could not be the only element in it. This schizophrenic approach led the conference into a desire to be at Mr. Churchill's Hague conference in spirit but not in body.

Aid and "Defence"

The debate on American "defence" of Europe has begun in the U.S.A. before the debate on American economic aid to Europe has ended. There will be increasing demands that all available money should be spent on military, rather than economic, projects. The President's demands for a draft (i.e., selective service for men under 35) and Universal Military Training has not caused a great deal of surprise or questioning. Mr. Wallace has denounced it as hysteria; Mr. Stassen has said it does not go far enough; but generally there has been unusual quiet. Congressmen are in a dilemma because, for once, there are active pressure groups on *both* sides of a question. To speak against Conscription brings the charge of not being aware of the reality of "the Russian menace"; to be for the draft earns the deep hostility of thousands whose lives will be broken up, and of those mothers who have retained the deep-seated American pacifist tradition. It is possible, therefore, that in election year Congress will seek to avoid by any means a vote on this issue. One likely line of escape is to vote extra funds for the Air Force (as recommended by the Finletter report) and retire behind the Maginot line of B.29's and atom bombs. Such action would seriously handicap the Administration, who are now convinced that—in Lippmann's words—"the struggle is now a race for military advantage, for strategical positions, for allies, and for the development of potential into actual military power."

The Doctors' Victory

After the B.M.A. "victory" conference, the doctors have dug themselves in and Mr. Bevan shows no signs of retreating from his prepared positions. His next move will be to rally the patients and test the solidarity of the doctors who voted their disapproval of the Act as it stands although it embodies what the profession's own Planning Commission proposed in 1942—including most of the items now in dispute. They now want to retain the sale of practices of which, in a previous ballot, the majority disapproved. Many doctors who voted against the Act approve of the basic salary which many others violently attack. The leaders of the profession agreed to the inducement fund to attract doctors away from over-doctored areas, but many balloted against this as "negative direction." "Right of appeal" was the battle-cry of some; yet many sensibly realise that that right cannot be denied them in common law and that Mr. Bevan is not proposing to abrogate this right. Moreover, it is more than doubtful if doctors will want to exercise it since, if the case for a doctor's dismissal were to come before the Courts, the public discussion of his professional shortcomings would ruin him. Instead of this, Mr. Bevan's care for the doctors has led him to provide a private tribunal which may debar a doctor from public practice, but which cannot prevent him from continuing in private practice. In fact, doctors disapproved for varying, and often conflicting, reasons. Having scored their political victory the leaders have to decide on what grounds they are prepared to stand. Both they and the Minister ought at once to explain to the profession how by Whitley Council procedure variations of conditions of service and remuneration will be decided and the doctors safeguarded against "conscription." This machinery is being set up regionally and functionally, but the rank-and-file of the profession do not understand it, because nobody has bothered to tell them.

The Co-ops Cut Prices

The decision of the Co-operative Societies to take the initiative in reducing retail prices is altogether welcome, even though it has aroused widespread anger among the small traders. Their protests carry the less weight because they have always denounced Co-operative trading as unfair, irrespective of the prices charged, and have demanded that the "divi." should be taxed as a trading profit instead of being treated as a rebate on the purchase price. The price-reductions now to be put into force are, of course, bound to react on the size of the "divi." The Co-operative member will pay less for what she buys, and will get the "divi." reduced, though not necessarily in proportion, at the end of the quarter. Save to the extent to which overhead costs can be cut down, there is no other source from which the reduction in prices can come—for the interest payable on Co-operative share capital has already in most cases been brought down as low as it can well be brought. Thus, on balance, the Co-operative member cannot have a great deal to gain: the chief gain will accrue to the entire community through the effect of lower Co-op. prices on the prices charged by their rivals. That is why the private traders are so annoyed. Sir Stafford and the country have reason to be grateful.

PARLIAMENT : Spring Cleaning

Tuesday

THIS is the season when Whips turn out old drawers and tidy the odds-and-ends of Bills and argument. Sometimes, as on the Committee Stage of the Palestine Bill, the children get in the way and have to be silenced with the closure.

The week began decorously. Many had expected the manpower debate to be a warmer-up for the economic debate after Easter. Cripps, at Isaacs's side, looked ready for a challenge. Instead, McCorquodale, who opened for the Tories, set an amiable note with a few questions on administration and a proposal that the Ministry of Labour should change its name. Fred Lee and W. J. Williams warned the Government that manpower was badly distributed, and made useful suggestions for its proper adjustment. Tories like Orr-Ewing censured the Minister of Labour for interfering too much and too little. Few speakers mentioned the threatening figure of 450,000 unemployed, forecast for the end of 1948 in the White Paper; and the Minister of Labour in his reply preferred to peck at the scattered chaff of a rather undistinguished debate, rather than deal with its major questions.

After Isaacs had defended the numbers of the Civil Service against Cooper, Glenvil Hall stood up for its language against Keeling. Keeling, like "Q," wanted the active verb, the concrete image, the substantive, in Government statements. That might be well, Pritt pointed out, but not always well. The only rule of language is that words should express their author's intentions; and who would want to dehydrate Milton, even to get pure Keeling?

Less academic, though it seemed to some Members considerably less real, was the debate on Civil Defence. The very title had a slightly archaic sound, recalling Morrison shelters, stirrup-pumps and the half-legible "Gas—Women, Gas—Men," on street corners. The House felt rather less reassurance when Anderson said that brown-paper will protect against the flash-burns of atomic bombs, than it did some years ago when it heard that "pikes will be issued." Those who spoke divided themselves into the emotional and the technical. Leah Manning was appalled. Shurmer was outraged. Vernon, Bechervaise, Noble and Wells dealt dispassionately with the technique of saving life from bombs. What would happen if an enemy used bacteriological weapons? That, like unemployment in the manpower debate, wasn't regarded as strictly relevant.

Emrys Hughes, a son-in-law of Keir Hardie, whose Socialism is a precise doctrine and an emotional faith, called the debate "terrifying," and asked the Government to abandon altogether the "ideology of war." Bechervaise—a former A.R.P. Controller—rebuked him as self-righteous. This recrimination, now current in the House, could scarcely be applied to Hughes, who is as modest as he is sincere.

After listening unflinchingly to Emrys Hughes's story of atom bomb horrors, members were roused to angry resentment at question time when the Minister of Fuel confirmed to Anthony Greenwood that he allows petrol for the purposes of blood sports. Not even the jeers of the Tories at a Labour Member who called hounds "dogs" could turn the subject into a laughing matter. Gaitskell passed Greenwood on to the Minister of Agriculture. He, in turn, told W. Hughes that he was advised by the War Agricultural Committees on how to keep down vermin. As Greenwood had already told the Minister of Fuel and Power that one man on a bicycle could do the job much better than a whole hunt, he put down a motion against the use of petrol for blood sports and rapidly attracted more signatures than Boothby for Western Union.

How the man-hunt goes, no one is yet aware. A series of questions to the Prime Minister and to the leader of the House established that in the proper search for security, the Government will be guided by good intentions. But on all sides of the House, it became clear, a great constitutional change was taking place which would have the effect of strengthening the powers of the executive and detracting from the rights of the subject. The last debate before the recess was probably the first of a series, examining the purge in the light of constitutional tradition.

MAURICE EDELMAN

COMMUNISTS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

ONE of our proudest achievements during the war was the retention of nearly all our civil liberties and—even more important—of an educated public opinion constantly on the look-out for unnecessary infringements of freedom by the Executive. A small all-party group inside the House of Commons, with strong backing in a section of the Press, worked unceasingly on the unpopular job of preventing gross injustices in the detention of Fascist suspects under Regulation 18B. The sting was taken out of Mr. Bevin's "total" labour direction by the parliamentary courage and pertinacity of Aneurin Bevan and his colleagues. By and large this country resolutely refused to succumb to hysteria or to tolerate witch-hunting. And when, as in the rounding up of German and Austrian aliens in the summer of 1940, excesses were committed, what was really remarkable was the outcry which they aroused and the speed with which the cruelty born of panic gave way to temperate and civilised treatment.

"Cold war" has brought with it in most parts of the world another and even more acute epidemic of witch-hunting. On the Communist side of the iron curtain, "reactionary" parties have been purged or suppressed, and Socialists, who sought to maintain a limited measure of independence, have been steadily squeezed into impotent subjection. Because the Marxist philosophy teaches that all politics are war, Communists have never felt any qualms, even in peacetime, about suppressing civil liberties. Fear of the unseen enemy must always be the pervasive atmosphere of the one-party State; and it is precisely this fact which makes the democratic Socialist repudiate Communism.

But fear and hysteria are not limited to the Communist half of the world. Already last year the epidemic had spread to America and caused such fantastic incidents as the Hollywood investigation. On that occasion the American Press laughed the Committee on "unAmerican activities" out of court; but, despite every effort of a liberal minority, anti-Communism in the United States is still breeding intolerance and petty persecution.

Up till the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia we could legitimately claim that, in a world of ideological insanity, Britain had remained an island of sobriety and good sense. Thanks very largely to the confidence of the working-class in the Labour Government, we have the most insignificant Communist party in the whole world; and British Conservatism, by honourably accepting its role of constitutional Opposition, has prevented the rise of any serious Fascist movement. Despite the growing tension of the last three weeks, our civil liberties are still based on the firm foundations of a public opinion, united in its detestation of inroads on personal freedom, and a judiciary aloof from political influence. Despite the lamentable growth of anti-Semitism, a Jewish M.P., accused and convicted of black marketeering, is exonerated, to general satisfaction, by the Court of Appeal; and the judgment of the Lord Chief Justice is the vindication not merely of an innocent and grossly mistreated man, but of British justice itself. In the same week, charges against a British officer for mishandling S.S. prisoners are tried in open court. Such incidents prove that the fabric of our liberty is still sound. For the test of freedom is the protection of the rights not of the majority but of the unpopular minority. Even the enemy of the people deserves a fair trial.

This is the background against which we should consider how British democracy can best deal with the Communist and the fellow-traveller, and in particular how a Labour Government should treat those members of the Civil Service suspected of Communist activity or Communist association. If the characteristics of the Communist State which most repel us are the purge and the public hysteria which accompany it, we must ensure that our remedies against Communist penetration do not infect us with the disease.

It is to be hoped that the Prime Minister was relieved to find that the response to his first statement was a mixture of approval and concern. As Mr. Warbey reminded the House of Commons last week, it is the duty of the private Member, irrespective of party, to concern himself for the personal freedom of the citizen. In adopting this attitude, Mr. Warbey was supported on all sides of the House, and a number of Motions have been tabled expressing the desire that reasonable security measures should not degenerate into a witch-hunt. This is all the more important when Socialists, whose resentment against Communist activity in the trade unions and in the Labour Party is deep-seated and long-standing, are in office. The essence of justice is the elimination of prejudice.

Unfortunately, as in the case of Fascists interned under 18B, the Government is compelled to proceed against Communist suspects in the Civil Service on the basis, not of legal evidence, but of information supplied by M.I.5; and to take action, not after the offence, but on the suspicion that it may be committed. In a secret department no difficulty arises in maintaining security, since here appointments are made on the express understanding that no reason need be given for dismissal. But in the Civil Service it is very difficult to suspend a man or even to move him from his job without stating the reason. It was this difficulty which caused the Prime Minister to make his statement. In future, it is proposed that Ministers shall have the right to suspend or transfer a Civil Servant if they suspect that a breach of security may be committed.

This is a reasonable precaution—on two provisos. The advice on which the Minister acts must be sound, and the person affected must have a chance of stating his case. The second condition is the easier of fulfilment. During the war the Swinton Committee was charged with the task of supervising the detainees. A public tribunal was impossible: first, because the evidence against the detainees could not be heard in public; and secondly, because the suspect could not be permitted to hear all the case against him. But, although sitting in secret, the Swinton Committee did a useful job. This precedent could surely be followed in the Civil Service to-day. What is needed is a special committee, working in secret, which sifts the information provided by M.I.5 and hears appeals in which the appellant can be represented by counsel.

The really difficult problem is, of course, the nature of the "evidence." When the war started, M.I.5 was a prejudiced and signally ill-informed organisation with ideas of "reliability" worthy of Colonel Blimp. Its dossiers, which included many of the present Cabinet, consisted too often of worthless tittle-tattle, much of it years out of date. By a fortunate dispensation a number of German fire bombs fell on Wormwood Scrubbs, where the files of M.I.5 were stored: and in 1941 a new start could be made by a greatly improved staff. When the war ended, a complete transformation of the department had been achieved.

But, since then, most of the expert wartime staff have returned to their civilian occupations, and it is to be feared that M.I.5, like so many other Service establishments, has got back to its peace-time ruts. A Minister, inexperienced in the ways of secret departments and anxious, naturally enough, to take no risks where security is in question, might only too easily be persuaded to commit unwittingly the gravest injustices and to weaken his expert staff for no sound reason at all. If we are to look forward to a long period of international tension, there is a strong case for a careful Government investigation of M.I.5 and an effort to staff it as adequately as it was staffed in wartime. If this task is undertaken, and if at the same time a special committee is established to advise Minis-

ters on the cases presented to them, we can be satisfied that precautions have been taken against grave injustice. If the matter is handled coolly and objectively on strict security grounds, the number of suspects is likely to be small.

It is already being suggested in some quarters that, in times of crisis, the Government cannot reasonably be asked to observe all the niceties of democratic procedure; and the argument is being propounded that the Communists, who have no respect for democracy, cannot expect democracy to respect their rights. But this is precisely the hysterical attitude which destroys democracy itself. That Communism itself uses the purge ruthlessly as an instrument of State policy is the best reason why, in defending ourselves against it, we should be scrupulous in ensuring that we get security and not a panic witch-hunt.

PRAGUE, 1948

II.—SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS

THE February revolution has cost the Czechs their personal freedom. Has it cost them their national independence? I had been led to expect that the atmosphere of Prague would be that of an occupied city; but nothing which I saw or heard confirmed this description. The Russians were notable by their absence. Although both Gottwald and his opponents knew that "strong measures" would receive full Russian support, the actual events arose out of a sudden and quite unexpected move by the Right-wing members of the Cabinet. They resigned on the morning of Friday, Feb. 20. It was not until Saturday that Gottwald called his first mass meeting in Prague. While the general strategy must have been agreed, it is difficult to see how the Communist tactic could have been directed from Moscow.

The evidence for the opposite view is, of course, the presence of Mr. Zorin, Molotov's deputy, in Prague. I tried to discover what part he had played, and learnt on very good authority that he saw Mr. Lausman, then Chairman of the Social Democrats, on the Monday night. That morning the Socialist Executive by a large majority had decided that the party should boycott the Action Committees and stick to the Mayer line. But next day, when the Executive reassembled, Mayer found himself in a minority of three. Lausman had taken his cue from Zorin. But it must be remembered that, during Monday, the Socialists were receiving plenty of reports to show that the rank and file were in fact joining the Action Committees, whether from loyalty to the working class movement or from reasons of self-protection. Whatever Zorin said to Lausman only confirmed him in an about-turn, for which there were plenty of other compelling reasons. Faced with the alternative of standing out in co-operation with the Right-wing parties, or surrendering itself to the proletarian *élan*, the Social Democrats—the smallest party in the State, and composed predominantly of middle class Marxists—were in an intolerable dilemma. As one of them put it to me: "I found that I would rather be wrong with the workers than right against them, though I admit that this will probably end by most of us becoming victims of the purge." I should guess that, even if Zorin had not been in Prague, only a minority of the Socialists would have had the courage to go into the wilderness with Mayer.

To suggest that what occurred is a "rape of Czechoslovakia" on the Nazi model seems to me both to disregard the inherent strength of the Czech Communist Party's hold on the working-class and to misinterpret the whole relationship between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. Stalin does not, like Hitler, capture countries merely by force or the threat of force and subdue them to a Russian Herrenvolk. He reaps the benefits from the successes of revolutionary movements with strong patriotic appeals.

This is particularly clear in the case of Czechoslovakia. All the parties, from Left to Right, had accepted the Russian alignment in foreign policy, and acquiesced in the necessity of repudiating the decision to participate in the Paris Conference. All of them had enthusiastically backed the Russian protests against the Anglo-American plans to rebuild the Ruhr. In leading this outcry—and exploiting it for their own purposes—the Czech Communists were appealing to the most powerful force in their national politics. The Czechs are pro-Russian, not merely because they are Slavs but because they are afraid—morbidly and neurotically afraid—of a German revival. They suffered longer under the Germans than any other nation and, throughout their agony, they remembered their betrayal by the West in 1938. Proportionate to their size, they expelled more Germans and did it with a more calculated ruthlessness than their Polish neighbours. The memory, first, of Munich, then of the occupation and lastly of the purging of the Sudeten areas, forms the mainspring of their foreign policy. Whereas, in their Eastern alignment, the Poles are inhibited by a deep-seated anti-Russian sentiment and by the memories of the Stalin-Hitler pact, the Czechs have no such inhibitions. As regards the German problem—and that is *the* problem of their national existence—they are Easterners who still instinctively regard it as a crime against humanity if an Englishman sends a pound of butter to a German child.

It is symbolic of this attitude that over half of the present Cabinet spent the war in a German prison or concentration camp; no less than five were together in Buchenwald. Talking to some of them, I began to realise how perverse it is to suggest that the present situation even remotely resembles a German occupation. What prevented any serious opposition to the Communist coup was precisely the fact that the nation as a whole is inclined to accept any sacrifice—even of liberty—if it helps to prevent the reconstruction of Germany which is believed to be the real aim of the Marshall Plan. In leading the opposition to E.R.P., the Communists appealed to patriotism and against material self-interest. Their opponents were always fatally embarrassed by the fact that any westernising policy seems in the present state of international relations to be treasonable and pro-German. Given their geographical position, given Munich and the years which followed, the Czech people will have to suffer much more than a loss of civil liberty before they hate Russia more than they fear Germany. That is why the position of Gottwald and his colleagues is so strong. They have been able to exploit the two most powerful political sentiments—class war and nationalism—in order to capture power.

In assessing the February revolution, it is essential to bear these facts in mind. The Socialists were not divided, as certain people in London seem to imagine, into a Right Wing which supported Mr. Bevin and a gang of fellow-travellers conspiring against him. In the sense that he sides with the Russians against the West on the issue of Germany, every Czech has been a fellow-traveller since Germany was included in the Marshall Plan. The difference between Mayer and Fierlinger was a difference about how a fellow-traveller should conduct himself, an issue of tactics in a small country where the international balance of power dominates the internal balance of power. Mayer was not a Westerner—that would be high treason for any Czech—but a man who believed that his party could achieve a little more elbow room by a parliamentary manoeuvre. His opponents in the party were not opposed to parliamentary democracy but were convinced that it would be imperilled if the Socialist Ministers overplayed their balancing position between Right and Left. To interpret this conflict in British terms is to distort it beyond recognition.

As for the Communists, their position has always been clear. They were ready to tolerate "bourgeois democracy"—they even enjoyed playing its complex game—so long as it did not endanger their controlling position or threaten their country's relations with the Soviet Union. An hour and a half with Mr. Slansky, the Secretary of the party, showed me clearly enough that he felt for parliament what Cromwell felt when he said: "Remove this Bauble." "How can you call this democratic?" I asked him. "Of course it's democratic. We have succeeded in purging *all* the parties of *all* their reactionaries." "And the newspapers?" "But there, too, we were constitutional. The Cabinet had unanimously passed a law that only recognised political parties should publish newspapers. We are keeping strictly to that rule. But now all the parties are reliable." Mr. Slansky had no qualms of conscience. He is an efficient man and he found it difficult to accept the "organised inefficiency" of parliamentary democracy.

There are Communists as well as Socialists who regard Mr. Slansky with alarm and rely to-day on the "moderating" influence of Mr. Gottwald. Civil liberty and legality are strong Czech traditions, and trade with the West is a national necessity if the economic crisis is not to get far worse than it already is. The critics of Mr. Slansky's dynamism admit that the opposition, now it has been driven underground, is unlikely to remain inactive despite the 15 miles defence belt occupied by the Czech army all along the frontier of the American Zone and the posse of secret police stationed on every military aerodrome to control the behaviour of the officers. But I find it difficult to believe that many Czechs will feel the Communist dictatorship a foreign occupation, or accept the view that its foreign policy is in conflict with national interests. The nation to-day is not united, as it was between 1938 and 1945, against an invader: it is divided by class war. That is the tragedy of Czechoslovakia and the strength of Mr. Slansky's position.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

A LONDON DIARY

THE ideological clothes still used to cover the nakedness of the Russian-American struggle have become comic and threadbare. The United States welcomes a Uno resolution to enquire into Soviet interference in Czechoslovakia, and in the same breath declares its intention of depriving the Italian workers of their food if they vote for the Democratic Front. The confusion has been most ludicrously expressed in our esteemed and usually careful contemporary, the *Spectator*. The front page of last week's issue began with the statement that "if the Italians can settle their own election a month from now without foreign interference, that will be the best that can be expected, but it will not remove the present dangers." It went on to say that "the Western Powers will have to take a strong and definite stand" in order to ensure that Italy will not "go Communist by default," like Czechoslovakia. "A promise of 400,000 tons of British coal and a secret visit by Western Trade Union officials, an incipient customs union with France, and an encouraging gesture from America do not add up to a strong stand." The *Spectator* has so far dropped into the psychology of war that the most open Allied intervention is simply assumed to be correct, while a Russian offer of grain to Italy is apparently an example of "foreign interference." Presumably the Allied initiative on Trieste does amount to a firm stand. As a move in a diplomatic game in which the Communists never stick to the rules, this latest Allied move is justifiable. As a French commentator gleefully remarked: "For once the Democracies have got a foul blow in first." Fair enough. But why pretend we're not "interfering"?

* * *

Clause 4 of the Criminal Justice Bill gives the Courts power to prescribe mental treatment, but sets up no machinery and makes no money available for making the clause effective. I gather that the Home Office hopes the Minister of Health will set up the machinery some day. If this means waiting for the carrying through of the essential provisions of the Health Act first,

the promise of mental treatment is illusory, and the clause a dead letter. Who is give the treatment? Where, and how? It is nonsense to say that it can only be given by "a qualified medical practitioner." What is wanted is a staff of persons experienced in psychological examination and psycho-therapy, working under medical supervision. There are a number of voluntary societies which can supply such experienced workers and which are prepared at once to start training schemes to increase the number of properly qualified persons both medical and lay. They also ask that grants shall be available for medical men and women who wish to carry out this treatment. It would seem to be a perfect case for the use of voluntary bodies. The Magistrates' Association and the Howard League have approached the Government to ask that bodies outside the Health Act where available can be used and their services paid for. I gather all such proposals have met with a blank refusal. I hope that the Home Secretary will reconsider this attitude and explain either in the House of Commons or elsewhere why his Department will not allow the provisions of his Bill to be carried out. The impression left at the moment is that the reason is departmental rigidity.

* * *

One of the few happy enterprises now going ahead in Europe is, arrangement of "hospitality" for children who need special care. In this case again the essential thing seems to be the co-operation of voluntary bodies and the public authorities. Last week, for instance, a hundred French children came to this country for a stay of four weeks. They are the children of prisoners of war from the province of Lille; those who visited their homes tell me that the only reason why the children look comparatively fit (though many of them have been badly knocked about psychologically) is that their mothers have starved themselves to feed them. They spend their time here, each in a separate home, freely offered by an English family. The organisation is in the hands of the I.H.C. (International Help for Children, 43, Parliament St., S.W.1.) of which the Lord Mayor is the President. This body needs money—especially until the Lord Mayor's "Unac" Fund is complete at the end of April, when presumably I.H.C. will have qualified for its share as a voluntary body doing the job. The main point is that in dealing with children you must have volunteers whose minds are set on the job of personal knowledge of the children and their homes: a great impersonal mechanism is quite wrong for such work. This organisation is also taking 600 children to Belgium in the summer. They come from poor and overcrowded homes in bombed towns such as Manchester, Wallasey and Dover, and the Councils of these towns readily pay £10 a head per child to pay for the fares and out of pocket expenses of the "leaders" who go to Belgium with the children. A cheap, sensible and happy arrangement.

* * *

The cover of *Asian Horizon*, a new 3s. 6d. quarterly, which appears this week, is charmingly adorned with a sketch of a Chinese village by Topolski. Presumably the angelic face in the top right-hand corner is that of the artist himself surveying the confusion of the Far East. The contents of the magazine fulfil the promise of the cover. No paper like this has appeared in this country before. Apart from two admirable, reflective articles on the relations between East and West by Pethick-Lawrence and Radakrishnan, most of the matter is contributed by young writers from Burma, Indonesia, Viet-Nam and China. The paper recommends no ideology and is not primarily political. Rather it deals with the social and artistic and political scene from the point of view of the newly awakened Asia which is conscious of its ancient culture, but equally conscious that it is creating a new civilisation, free at last from both Japanese and Western domination. The magazine contains eight pages of excellent photographs designed to illustrate the ancient and modern life of Siam. I gather that the idea is for each issue to contain similar plates devoted to developments in an Asiatic country. An interesting feature of the paper is the reproduction of short extracts from the speeches of Pandit Nehru, Thakin Nu, Prime Minister of Burma, Ho Chi Minh, President of the Viet-Nam Republic, and of Dr. Sjahrir, who represents Indonesia. No more effective way could have been found of illustrating the spirit of this Asiatic revival, which is neither Eastern nor Western, nor exactly what we in the West call democracy or Socialism. It is something new, which yet contains all these elements.

* * *

Congress was a union of many forces created to drive the British out of India; like the Muslim League which had a similar unity in resistance, it must in time lose its unity when its purpose is fulfilled. There was therefore nothing surprising in the decision of the Socialist Party at their annual conference in Bombay to leave Congress. When I saw Jai Prakash Narain, the Socialist leader, in Delhi just before Gandhi's murder, he regarded secession as a foregone conclusion. Doubt only arose because in the new situation following the death of the Mahatma, Jai Prakash offered to join Nehru's Cabinet in order to support the Premier in his struggle against the fanatics of the R.S.S. and Mahasabha. But the offer was coupled with an attack on Mr. Patel (afterwards largely withdrawn by Jai Prakash) and seemed rather *a cri du coeur* than a political move. In the form in which it was made, Nehru could not have accepted Jai Prakash's offer; indeed, he was compelled to defend Patel, who did not fail to point out that the leader of the Socialists had formerly refused several invitations to join the Government. The impression left on me from the whole incident was that the Socialist Party, though strong in some areas—it is still stronger than the Communists in Bombay—resembles the I.L.P. rather than the Labour Party. Jai Prakash, like so many Indian politicians, has been deeply influenced by Gandhi, and seeks, I think, the clear conscience of opposition rather than the muddied second-best of office and responsibility.

* * *

As the state of the Stock Exchange reflects the confidence, or otherwise, of the investors, so are current types of theft a measure of our shortages. When electric bulbs and leather straps disappear from railway carriages we realise, if we did not know already, that they are scarce. I can understand, too, how great an incentive to shoplifting in stores a lack of clothing coupons must be. But I had never heard, until recently, that the rise in value of lead and zinc is leading to the wholesale pilfering of piping from the outsides of houses. A friend, who is out all day, tells me that she came back from work the other evening to find all the drainpipes gone. Someone else tells me of an even worse experience. While he was away from home for a short period, a group of men, ostensibly in the building trade, came to the house and began activities on the roof. When asked what they were doing, they said they were repairing it. When the unfortunate owner returned, he found that the entire roof, made of lead, had been removed, and presumably disposed of in the Black Market. To add to his dismay, when he hopefully rang up his insurance company to tell them his roof had been stolen, and would they kindly pay to replace it, he was met, first with laughter, and then with the news that house insurance policies had never contemplated so peculiar a form of burglary and did not cover it. So now he is protected neither financially nor physically.

* * *

A note of cheer in an otherwise gloomy world: on the first day of Spring workmen began to remove the air-raid shelters from Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Postscript: Next day Sir John Anderson recommended new shelters against atomic bombs.

CRITIC

ALL THIS AND AMBER TOO

"Forever Amber" lands at Heathrow in the Airliner Golden Fleece.—Evening Standard, March 13.

The Board of Trade with pride present
"Forever Amber!"
Approved by H.M. Government,
"Forever Amber!"
While Hollywood proclaims a *coup*,
They will release for public view,
With Ministerial ballyhoo,
"Forever Amber!"

They cut food imports to the bone,
But can man live by bread alone?
We must afford those imports which
Our spiritual life enrich.
The Government resolves to give
The cultural initiative,
To show the way we still pursue,
The way of life projected through
"Forever Amber!"

Though paper shortage is deplored,
Though newsprint we can ill afford,
Though school and text books we must stint,
Though classics must go out of print,
Though poverty from readers keeps
The works of Gibbon, Boswell, Pepys,
The technicolour version new
To history's maze provides a clue,
"Forever Amber!"

The threatened culture of the West
Will not in Britain be suppressed,
The British Government extol
The Merry Monarch's minor moll
Who closed her economic gap
Forever, on her sovereign's lap,
While with her titled retinue
Forever keeping rendezvous,
"Forever Amber!"

Forever Britain's screen supplies
"Forever Amber!"
A field for rival enterprise,
"Forever Amber!"
Now films-for-dollars are taboo
We're stuck for good like flies in glue,
Forever stuck with Amber too,
"*Forever* Amber!"

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed.

Paste entries on a postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

A railway engine-driver who, it was said, acted upon a sudden urge and drove a train through closed level-crossing gates was described as "not quite a normal man," by his defending counsel, at Littlehampton (Sussex) yesterday.—*News Chronicle*. (Mrs. A. M. Lamb.)

"Our purpose is to bring the standard of our industry up to the level of the medical profession—without nationalisation," said Mr. Charles W. Tait, national vice-president, speaking at the Bristol and District Funeral Directors' Association's annual dinner at the Grand Hotel.—*Bristol Evening Post*. (Ellis R. Benjamin.)

To enable Nelson's old school, the Paston Grammar School, North Walsham, to become State-aided but not controlled, an appeal for funds is being issued accompanied by a copy of a letter written left-handed by Nelson to General Earle Bulwer, father of Lord Lytton.—*The Times*. (P. Cook.)

Typist required for director's office. Typing an asset.—Advertisement in *West London Observer*. (Miss B. Child.)

Name of the Liquor Traffic United Committee has been changed to Overseas Temperance Council for the Protection of Indigenous Peoples from the Liquor Traffic.—*Reynolds News*. (Mrs. Nicholas.)

REPORT ON TURKEY

TURKISH foreign policy, based on the conviction that the third world war is unavoidable and that in the East-West crack-up Turkey will be the first victim, is dominated by a violent hostility to Russia that reflects the almost tangible mood in the streets, the clubs, universities and coffee-houses of Ankara and Istanbul. Again, on the domestic side the most vociferous critics of Communism and the Soviet Union point with pride to the "democratisation" of modern Turkey, to the rise of liberalism since the war, to the growth of an Opposition and the abandonment of a single-party dictatorial regime.

The further away you are from the Bosphorus, the stronger the temptation to interpret Turkish politics in terms of the ideological patterns of the West. The fact that hits you the moment you touch Turkish soil, as strikingly as the multi-chorded horns of Istanbul's taxis smite the ear, is that politics here do not fall easily into the Western slots of Right and Left, capitalist and Socialist. The names of the two parties, the (Government) People's Republican Party and the (Opposition) Democratic Party, have the relevance of the titles of a Hollywood film. There is no serious Left Wing in Turkey. Communism is illegal, and known Communists are in jail. Indeed, there is an almost pathological phobia, which is general, against anything that may be remotely construed as smacking of Communism. Socialism, of the kind expressed in the British Labour Party's election programme, has no outlet, either in speech or in the press. There is no law against a Socialist paper. But the incidents two years back, when two mildly progressive journals were attacked in students' demonstrations and their presses smashed, serve as a constant warning.

Political conflict in Turkey has thus the elemental simplicity of a rivalry between two parties, sharing the same ideology, but one in the saddle, the other aspiring to power. That is the current political game being played in the principal cities of modern Turkey. The players are less numerous in the provinces and the vast hidden lands of Anatolia, where the bulk of the peasants can neither read nor write, where few newspapers penetrate, and where, despite the richness of the Turkish larder and undergound resources, life, through the absence of communications and modern implements of agriculture, is a tough bare-hand struggle with rugged nature. Most of these folk are unaware that their futures are vitally bound up with decisions reached in their capital.

There is no doubt that those decisions have been profoundly influenced by the Truman Doctrine. Turkey's allocation of direct United States Military Aid is 100 million dollars—55 millions to the Army, 24 millions to the Navy and 16 millions to the Air Force, with 5 millions earmarked for strategic road construction. Only a small percentage of this Aid has been delivered so far, and the full U.S. Military Mission strength will not be completed until April. It will then comprise 100 American flying instructors, 100 ground force personnel, 40 naval officers, and 20 road construction experts. The vanguard of the highway engineers has already arrived and has started surveying. These experts have been "invited" by Turkey. There is nothing in the Aid clauses which insist that only American instructors be used. They have not, as in Greece, an integrated role with the local general staff.

In the last month Ankara has been complaining, in private, to the American Mission about the inadequacy of the Aid and the delay in deliveries. Major General Horace L. McBride, Chief of the U.S. Military Mission, recently went to Washington, urging this view on the State Department, which is seeking Congress support for an additional 125 million dollars to Turkey. Half will go to the Air Force. This is in addition to Turkey's receipt of Marshall Aid.

Socialists, who have no use for either the Government or the Opposition party, tell you in private (since they have no organisation) that in 1945, with the Fascist collapse and the Allied victory, Turkey was prepared to turn a leaf and adopt a democratic political pattern, abolish the police laws, introduce habeas corpus, allow freedom of speech and association, and amend the electoral laws to guarantee free elections. In external affairs, Turkey was prepared to develop friendly relations with her Soviet neighbour. Truman Aid, they say, put a stop to this. They add that Russia helped the change by what they term her tactless claims on Kars and Ardahan and her demand for the revision of the Montreux Convention. Even those who believe there is something to be said for Soviet claims add that, pressed as they were, they have provided a patriotic peg on which the Government has been able to hang the repression of "advanced" views and movements.

American officials here agree that military aid has stiffened Turkey's anti-Soviet mood. But they add that that mood was already prevalent. They deny that American help has served to slow up the democratising process. They claim, on the contrary, that it has had the effect of pumping a breath of liberalism into the regime, in the governmental belief that America, which is providing this Aid, would wish to see American political ideas introduced into the country. True, they say, Turkey is not a democratic State on the Western model. But only a generation ago it was a backward Oriental feudalism. It has made great strides since then. It cannot sweep away all the old trappings overnight, but it is on the way to doing so.

Time has certainly not stood still in Turkey. This country, in the space of 25 years, has seen a complete revolution in form and fashion, and in political and social habits. An Oriental land has been turned into a country of the West—at least in the towns—with the virtues and vices of the West: Western dress, emancipated women, a Latin script, the Swiss Civil Code, international clock and calendar, disestablishment of the church, monogamy, neon lights, Hollywood films, and the latest American-model limousines as taxi-cabs for the moneyed Instanbulians. All this was achieved by Kemal Ataturk and his single-party regime. Only a dictatorship, it is claimed, could have effected such a revolution. And Ataturk, you are told, was the one dictator who was prepared, just before he died, to relax his dictatorship and introduce part of the democratic pattern into his rule, at least to the extent of permitting opposition.

Not until after the war was an effective Opposition party created and elections held. President Ismet Inenu, carrying out the wishes of Ataturk, but also influenced no doubt by the democratic victory in the one world war in the last 100 years in which Turkey took no part, resolved to allow political opposition. None can tell whether a genuine rival party was envisaged or simply a puppet party to serve as a display in the political window. But it is unlikely that the founders of the Democratic Party, faithful supporters and friends of Ataturk and the Kemalist revolution, reckoned on the psychological effect of uncorking a political bottle that had been sealed for 22 years. For the Democratic party quickly drew into its ranks a heterogeneous variety of groups, merchants and schoolteachers, bankers and warehouse clerks, each with his own reasons for disliking the regime. The progressives hated the illiberal police laws; the merchants disliked *étatisme*—the limited nationalisation which Ataturk had introduced. Elections were held in July, 1946, and the Democratic Party swept the main towns. In the capital itself, the Opposition candidates topped the list, polling 20,000 votes more than President Inenu, who was one of the Government party candidates. But the electoral law did not provide for careful scrutiny in the provinces, though it enabled town and country votes to be pooled, so that provincial votes "corrected" Government reverses in the towns. The National Assembly met with almost arbitrarily fixed returns—396 for P.R.P., and 54 for the Democrats.

To-day, the struggle for power between P.R.P. and Opposition Democrats is real. For, despite the overwhelming Government majority in the Assembly, there are signs of disintegration within the party. The Democrats are confident that revision of the police and electoral laws will put them in the saddle at the next election. They feel that electoral revision, and therefore fresh elections, may come within the next eight months, partly through American moral influence, and partly because the moderates in the P.R.P. may consider it sound tactics to take the wind out of the Democrat sails.

On paper, the chances of elections before 1950 would appear to be nil. For the Assembly was elected for a four-year term, and the Government's majority is decisive. But in current Turkish politics anything may happen. Last September, Prime Minister Recep Peker resigned. No one can explain why, even to-day. P.R.P. has two main politically conscious groups, extreme Right and "Moderates," with a large body of "don't knows" in between. Peker, who leads the Right is a man of considerable skill who learned much about the workings of the corporate state on visits to Mussolini's Italy before the war. He has not forgotten what he learnt.

To-day's Government, under Premier Hasan Saka and Foreign Minister Nejmeddin Sadak, may be termed "Centre Moderate." It wishes to preserve the *status quo* but is not alarmed, as Peker was and is, by the thought of limited reform. President Inenu is known to favour the "Moderates." But at the P.R.P. convention a few months ago, the first ever to be held in public, it was Peker and not the President who won over the "don't knows." For, with electoral reform, P.R.P. chances of victory at the next elections are slight. And membership of the Assembly is a vested interest not lightly forgone. Peker, standing for no change, represents personal security for deputies.

Since then, the gap between "moderates" and reactionaries within the P.R.P. has widened, and the Democrats have been quick to exploit the fissures. The resignations of Hamdoullah Souphi Tanrieuver from the party and of Huseyin Djahit Yalchin from the Executive are pointers to possible disintegration of the party. Many of the P.R.P. rank-and-file may think it wise to switch in order to be on the winning side. The Democrats have already made it plain that, if they win, they will support Inenu as an above-party candidate for the Presidency, even though he is a P.R.P. member.

A Democratic victory will bring no change to Turkish foreign policy. With the death the other day of the Assembly's President, General Kazim Karabekir, Turkey lost its principal figure of calibre who advocated friendship with Russia on grounds of mutual interest. The Democratic Party is as bitterly anti-Soviet and anti-Communist as the P.R.P. Right Wing, and even more anxious to strengthen ties with the Western Bloc. Internally, an Opposition victory would mean a rigid curb on State powers to interfere in the business life of the country, a sweeping away of *étatisme* and the introduction of a thoroughgoing laisser faire in industry and commerce. It would not legalise Communism. Nor would it restrain anti-Socialist "demonstrations" by students.

The Ataturk revolution has ended. Now, with everyone waiting for the next war—some even eager for the fray to make up, somehow, for their neutrality in the last—Turkish foreign policy will continue to be a facet of East-West relations, while home policy will continue to mark time, irrespective of a Cabinet change. American military aid will be repeated at regular intervals, and the increased demands of the Turkish armed services will continue to dominate the Turkish budget. Planes will continue to be more vital than schools. Party activities will carry on as moves in the game of internal power politics—with the issue, not the nature of the strings, but simply who pulls them.

MAURICE PEARLMAN

HOW MANY BABIES?

ONE of the most interesting chapters in Mrs. Hubback's most interesting book* is that which examines the reasons for the relative neglect of the population problem. The broad outlines of the situation are sufficiently clear. The average number of children per family is now 2, compared with the Victorian average of 5. The net reproductive rate is 0.8, that is to say, 0.2 below the figure at which the population replaces itself. The recent rise during the war and post-war years is due to special causes which will neither continue nor recur, with the result that by the year 2039, given the continuance of pre-war trends, the population of England and Wales will have dropped from 42 million to 14 million. It may well drop still lower since (i) as the population declines, there will be a much larger proportion of old people, that is to say, of persons who are (a) infertile and (b) liable to die and so send up the death rate; and (ii) the practice of birth control has still to penetrate through a number of social strata and it has still to become efficient. While the effects of a reduction in the population of England and Wales to one-third of its present level in a hundred years' time are incalculable, it is clear that they will be considerable. They provide an entirely new perspective for the viewing and discussing both of the economic situation and of the problems of international power politics. Yet, oppressed by short-term problems, we rarely spare a glance for long-term trends. There are also, Mrs. Hubback hints, psychological resistances; more, perhaps, to the point is the fact that *we* shall not be these.

It is this comparative neglect of the population problem that sharpens our feeling of gratitude to Mrs. Hubback for bringing all the relevant material together in a measurable compass and for presenting this material clearly and agreeably. I hope she will not take it amiss if I say that, for me, the main interest of the book lies in its facts. It is a mine of important and often surprising information. As, for example, that the average age at which women marry has dropped from 26 in 1911 to 24.6 in 1938; that Mass Observation and Gallup Poll inquiries show that, whereas among normal persons the average family is 2, among persons claiming adherence to the Churches of England or Rome it is 3; that, whereas the average number of children *desired* by people of all social classes is 2.6, nevertheless women in all social classes think that they *ought* to have 4 children; that from 16-20 per cent of all pregnancies end in miscarriages, of which 40 per cent are deliberately induced, the B.M.A. estimate of abortions being about 60,000 a year; that by the year 2,000 the age group of males between 15 and 35 will, given a continuance of pre-war trends, number just half the pre-war figure; that in the same year persons over 50 will comprise 53 per cent of the population; that by 1975 there will be 31 Old Age pensioners for every 100 National Health Insurance contributors; that at some time between 1970 and 2,000 the population of the U.S.S.R. will reach 300 million; that New Zealand, a country as large as Great Britain with a population of 1½ million, enjoys the highest standard of living in the world; that the amount of land in England and Wales covered by buildings, roads, factories and railways is 11.3 per cent. of the total area; that of 3,991 individuals of all ages attending the Peckham Health Centre, 90 per cent had "one or more pathological diseases," yet of these only one-third felt that their health was below standard.

In the same category of interest I would place Mrs. Hubback's additions to our knowledge of the causes of the population decline. The later marrying age of women, the education instead of the employment of children, the necessity to "keep up with the Joneses," the spread of birth control—all these are familiar enough. Mrs. Hubback adds the decline of religious belief, as a result of which "the proportion of people who "feel at home in the world, assured of the purpose of life and of its ideals, is fewer than before"; the fact that the mother of a large family making yet another appearance in the maternity ward of a hospital is regarded as an object of pity and scorn; plus such incidenta items as more amusements, more civic responsibilities, more art, science, music and philosophy, more hiking and holidays in the country.

Among so much that is important it seems ungrateful to cavil at what is questionable. Resisting the temptation to rally Mrs. Hubback on the easy confidence with which she polishes off the question "Is life worth living?" in a page and a half, I venture to question her view that family life is on the whole growing happier. She has no difficulty in disposing of the enormous increase in the divorce rate as a reason for supposing that it is growing more miserable. Her view is that the facts that husbands no longer dominate, that wives are better educated and less inferior, that husbands parted from their wives during the war loved them very much in their letters, and that most families are better off, constitute reasons for thinking that the average home is no longer a little brick box of ill-assorted contents with the old people "hating and thwarting the young people for behaving like young people and the young people hating and spiting the old people for behaving like old people." On the day on which I read this comforting verdict, the Earl of Feversham is reported as saying in the House of Lords that "if the present rate of marriage breakdowns continued, one marriage in every five was going to end in disaster. In ten years' time there will be no fewer than 4 million men and women in this country who had failed in marriage." A recent Gallup Poll has, moreover, disclosed that whereas 22 people out of every hundred questioned thought that family life today is more successful than it was in the last generation, 48 thought that it was less successful.

Mrs. Hubback writes as an avowed advocate of a large population. She is prepared to look with equanimity on a decline of about 10 or 12 millions *provided that the British have built up a denser population in Canada and Australia*, but she is alarmed at the thought that the population of Britain may sink to a lower figure. All her opinions and recommendations are conditioned by the assumption "both that life is on the whole good, and that the British nation with its mixture of races and the influence it exerts on world affairs is abundantly worth conserving." In other words, there is nobody like us and, therefore, within limits, the more of us the better. And that we should remain as many as possible, she draws up a list of recommendations—material and psychological—designed to induce people to have more children. Yet, it is far from clear that, even if Mrs. Hubback's material requirements were met, the birth rate would increase. In fact, nearly all the available evidence shows that, as standards of living rise, the birth rate declines. Mrs. Hubback is, of course, well aware of this; the basic cause of the lower birth rate is, as she rightly says, psychological. "The reasons which account for the decline in the birth rate must be therefore those which influence the intentions of the parents and are voluntary in character." The pertinent question is, therefore, whether "even under the most favourable circumstances" people are "likely to be content with the present low average of about two children instead of the average of three required for replacement purposes?"

I think that they are, precisely in so far as they have begun to prefer quality of life to quantity. My guess is that the great majority of the babies who have ever been born have been unwanted or, if the word be preferred, unplanned. I take the following to be typical.

> At the Peckham Health Centre, records were kept during 1943 of 62 babies conceived after their parents had joined the Centre. Of these conceptions, 6 were actively resented, 26 were accidental, 30 were deliberate.

In the days when the birth rate was over 30 per thousand our grandmothers bore their numerous children, not because they wanted them, but because they did not know how to prevent them. Her own grandmother, Mrs. Hubback tells us, "wept every time a new baby was on the way." So did mine.

I venture here to invoke two criteria; the first, that of happiness. If women are to live varied and happy lives and not to be regarded as merely baby-bearing machines, they cannot be tied indefinitely to the home. To put the same point negatively, if they are so tied, their lives, given present standards and expectations of well-being, will be unhappy. Secondly, that of intelligence; there is a good deal of statistical evidence to the effect that the children of large families are less intelligent than those of small ones. The reason is to be found in the differential birth rate. The lower one's position comes in the scale of occupational well-being and intellectual development, the larger the number of one's children; in the thirties for example, 1,000 unskilled workers in the relevant ages were producing on an average 153 children per annum, while 1,000 professional workers were producing less than 100. A smaller population will almost certainly entail an ironing out of this dysgenic differential birth rate. When we take into account the improvement in education likely to attend the teaching of children from 15-20 instead of from 30-40 or even 50 to a class, the gain in intelligence will, I suggest, be no less manifest than the gain in general happiness.

As to the argument that there is nobody like us, if it is to be interpreted to mean that the British people possess certain qualities of political intelligence, common sense, kindliness, tolerance and the rest, qualities of which the world stands desperately in need, I am quite prepared to believe this to be true, but it does not follow that these qualities will be most outstandingly displayed, if our lives are made miserable and irritable by the fact that there are always too many of us to be served and too few to serve, so that the commonest dealings of daily life are transformed into a Herculean struggle in which we pay in frayed nerves the price of our inflated population.

Mrs. Hubback points out appropriately enough that the prosperity of a nation is determined not so much by "the total numbers so much as the numbers of those who, by virtue of their intelligence, their standards of value, their education, their general competence and strength of character are the leaders of the people in the widest sense." The conclusion seems to be that, granted our possession of the qualities which I agree with her in thinking desirable, our problem is to determine what population will permit us to become most completely ourselves and so to exhibit these qualities most successfully. It is far from clear that that population even remotely approaches the present figure.

C. E. M. JOAD

* *The Population of Britain.* By EVA M. HUBBACK. Pelican Books.

THE LOST CRITIC

The cuckoo's done his round,
And always distant gone his distant way
This end of June.
He's gone alone, just as he lives alone,
Not often seen wherever he has been,
Though sometimes, where he's flown,
I've seen him, but always far away,
And early in the day.
He is a lesson in what not to own.
He is the singing lodger, if it's song
That is but two notes long,
And both derisive, both
Symbols of ancient sloth
Mocking our civil nights and days
And all that we are prone to value most,
Our virtue and our purse,
Treasures he's never lost
Flitting from pillar to post,
A question in the woods, a ghost
If nothing worse,
The cuckoo! But now he's done,
And gone!

RICHARD CHURCH

The Arts and Entertainment

PAINTINGS

Paul Nash—A Memorial Exhibition at the Tate

Paul Nash was an artist who continues to hold our interest in spite of a number of grave pictorial deficiencies. Though we gain a clearer notion of what these faults and inabilities are each time we see his pictures, our main sympathies are scarcely affected: inadequate pictorial means, though they explain the tentative structure and tepid colour of his canvasses, have not obstructed the transmission of imaginative ideas of a poetic nature. Nash has introduced us to a dreamworld whose landscapes very closely resemble certain areas of Southern England —the Downs of Wiltshire, Berkshire and Sussex; the sea coast at Rye or Dymchurch; the rich variety of trees in a Kent park or Russell Square. A dreamworld reconstruction based on such familiar places cannot fail to appeal to an English spectator: the nostalgic mood of the wide-open, grey-green spaces depicted by Nash is valid; it is an actual aspect of these parts, which the artist has extracted, not injected. But our ability to recognise and respond to his subject-matter is not necessarily a measure of his pictorial power; it is proof more of his gift as poet or dreamer than as painter. A test is to notice whether the place a landscape depicts, or the objects and setting of a still-life, remain more certain in the mind than the design, the texture and handling of the painting itself. Finally, I am afraid, one must say that they do; so far from a unique image, or complex of images, rendered in terms of paint being uppermost in one's consciousness one finds that one's fondness for Silbury Hill or a typical formation of beech trees gripping the chalky hillside has led one to work one's way past the obstacle of colourless colours or obvious design (making superficial use of Cubist discoveries).

All this, however, is not to say Paul Nash was a literary painter whose interest was exclusively in the subject—like Dali or Holman Hunt. It is rather to indicate the paradoxical nature of his pictorial achievement. I think if he had been gifted in a single additional respect the whole character of his art would have been changed. It seems to me that he was almost devoid of an understanding of colour, of the fundamental part it plays in pictorial expression. One is aware in almost every oil that two distinct processes have gone on in his mind side by side, the first positive the second negative. The first was drawing, the second a "colouring-in" of the drawing. The first was all-important; it recorded his primary reactions; by means of it he created all that he did create. His spontaneous distortions, those elongated cigar-like clouds, those waves of curling tin, those tubular tree-trunks, hills like inverted baking tins, foliage like torn or folded paper, those rigid avenues of well-drilled beeches which accentuate a perspective so steep and sudden that it becomes itself one more symbol, like his ever-present suns and moons—all this is presented without the assistance of colour, which influences its character not at all. Cézanne's dictum to the effect that colour and form are, in the final analysis, identical was not a piece of abstract theory but an assertion of fact. If one takes a Cubist still life by Gris, for instance, there is not one form which would not assume a different shape if rendered in a different colour: colour, by its hue and intensity, establishes a position for itself in space; adjacent colours operate upon it, and upon one another, to assist this creation of illusory space "behind" the surface of the canvas. The colour of a form thus plays as decisive a part in the evocation of its mass, density and even its outline as does drawing. A painter who thinks in terms of black, grey and white, whose thought that is to say is fully expressed without resort to vibrating areas of colour, is vastly handicapped in the struggle to create the volume of form and space. He is likely to overtax mere drawing as such, to overemphasise the thrust and direction of his forms, thus isolating them each from each and making individual forms too closed-in, too little able to introduce us to the other forms in the picture. Every part of a picture should point us to a number of other parts just as each form should be affected by, even "distorted" by, its neighbours. This hardly occurs in the work of Paul Nash, where objects remain too much themselves and are too aloof from one another. Indeed there is so little jostling, so little commerce between the various items in his landscape or still life that one notices Nash tending to place his objects at such intervals on the receding ground planes that they are each visible in their entirety; none overlapping another, no part of one being hidden behind a part of an object in front of it. This is only a tendency (some of the surrealist pictures of downland inhabited solely by white fungi are clear cases); but it is indicative of the character of his plastic thought: we feel him laying out the whole thing as one builds a model of a village, constructing it solidly in his mind and then finally looking at it from a certain chosen angle and making what he saw fit into a pictorial design. More than any other painter of equal distinction Nash strikes us as having failed to unite a number of processes in a single intuitive act.

However, in the context of the English painting of 1914-40 Paul Nash is indeed an outstanding painter. If his handling was prim and his colour often only a means of hiding the canvas, his forms were highly original and very successful in one vital respect: they were not only genuine transmutations of the forms of the natural world, but, by virtue of their actual shape and not of association, they gave off what we are thinking of when we refer to the "poetic atmosphere" of his work. This may possibly seem a fine point: but I think it is possible to say that the forms an artist creates can be highly imaginative without being satisfactorily plastic. Where I believe Nash was most successful in the sense that there is a fusion of vision and actual means was in his watercolours.

PATRICK HERON

RADIO NOTES

"FEATURE"—there could scarcely be a more dead-pan word with which to describe the liveliest of radio *genres*. The liveliest, but also the most difficult, demanding as it does more than ordinary resources of literary skill and ingenuity from the writer. For, however much it may be disguised, the aim of the feature is to present facts, give information, or express opinion, and facts are stubborn, not always readily amenable to dramatic treatment. Yet somehow—and this is the whole art of the feature-writer—they must be jollied, wheedled or bullied into assuming dramatic form in such a way that they do not obtrude like clots of oatmeal in badly cooked porridge, while at the same time the structure of the drama must not offend dramatic probability. It was in the latter respect that Mr. Michael Meyer's *A Green Room in Limbo* failed. He was concerned with the expression of ideas, with the relative importance of the stage director and the actor in a dramatic production. The radio feature can be an admirable vehicle for literary and dramatic criticism and it may well give birth to a new form of criticism reminiscent of Dryden's *Essay on Dramatic Poetry*, which, incidentally, one would welcome a chance of hearing on the air. Mr. Meyer's matter was good. But his method! He chose as the spokesmen of his argument Macready and Stanislavsky meeting in Limbo. That by itself one could have accepted; but the programme was introduced by a gentleman who told us, in cracked if not broken English, that he was Chehov, in Limbo, where all the good poets go—as he showed by matey reference to Sophocles, "old" Dante and "young" Keats. Exit Chehov. But too late: after that nightmare vision of a hell composed of poets criticising one another's works and of actors busily acting in the plays of resident dramatists, no dialogue, however brilliant, could have convinced. The problem facing Mr. Meyer was one of poetic faith. Coleridge's words were the "willing suspension of disbelief" not "the active inculcation of disbelief."

The problem facing Mrs. Pain and Mr. Kenneth Alexander in their study in persecution mania, *The Life History of a Delusion*, was rather different, but scarcely less ineptly resolved. A clinical study from a medical psychologist's case-book transferred to the air, the case itself had the morbid fascination one expected. But in order to present the analysis of the case Mrs. Pain used the old device of the double narrator, in this instance an experienced psychiatrist who knew all the answers and, as his stooge, a young Canadian doctor whose job it was to interject from time to time such remarks as "Hm! hm!" and "It certainly sounds interesting!" This method of construction meant that the dramatic episodes almost inevitably reminded one of the inset drawings in an advertisement for patent medicine; they were simply illustrations of a lecture. The programme was not helped at all by the execrable quality of the writing of the psychiatrist's part: it is surely bad manners to throw dollops of jargon in the listener's face.

With *Lillibulero* and *The Case of Dr. Crippen*, however, one had the chance of seeing what the radio feature could be in the hands of first-rate craftsmen. Mr. Denis Johnston told the story of the siege of Londonderry with a bold imagination and an almost Elizabethan vigour, though the production was not worthy of the script. One admired greatly the formal structure of the programme and the use Mr. Johnston made of a bold, straightforward blank verse. *Lillibulero* had a most rewarding amplitude, but what made it especially fascinating was the glimpse it offered of the possibilities of the feature as a poetic medium, how, for example, a poet of Hardy's stature could to-day write a work comparable to *The Dynasts* in terms of radio.

Trials always make good radio, and Mr. John Gough's *The Case of Dr. Crippen* was almost a model of its kind. Dramatically gripping, it presented most cunningly and excitingly the information on circumstantial evidence that was its *raison d'etre*. The narration, brilliantly spoken by Mr. McKechnie, was particularly well handled; an integral part of the feature, it never obtruded and was perfectly balanced with the dramatic passages. The production was excellent, and so was the acting. Mr. Clive Morton's Crippen and Mr. Frederick Lester's Lord Chief Justice being especially commendable.

WILLIAM SALTER

THE MOVIES

"Les Jeux Sont Faits" and "Brief Encounter" at Studio One.

Existentialism is as existentialism does, and at Studio One I had the feeling that it should do rather better. Perhaps, with this most fashionable of -isms, it's the feeling one always has. M. Sartre himself—peaked hat and wand laid aside—is another matter. He can impart a more than prickly sensation to the printed page. I remember, from pre-war days, the inexorable gooseflesh of *La Nausée;* then the chipped rim, the cold lees, the drowning fly were very much his cup of tea. From these neurotic beginnings has emerged a sense of human destiny, harsh, witty, lurid, and compelling, which has found its most remarkable expression on the stage. *Huis Clos* was the best dramatic shocker since Strindberg, and *Les Mouches* provided at least a much-needed diversion from the fashionable traffic with Greece. Now, with a first attempt at films, M. Sartre shows himself both less single-minded and less successful. *Les Jeux Sont Faits* is part intimate drama, part social realism, part popular fantasy, part philosophical trimmings; and these several planes, though never without interest, don't as a rule coalesce. Two lovers return from the dead, in approved film fashion, on condition they don't quarrel. A Fascist dictator hopes by goading his opponents to violence to make himself paramount. You arrive at the next world by queueing in an alley off a pleasure garden. God bellows an instruction through the skylight (*"Mais oui, M. le Directeur!"*). Classes clash, lovers can't get together, the machine-guns start. The "second chance" never quite comes off. *Ah, si la vie savait, si la mort pouvait.*

It can't be said that this congeries of wishes and actions makes very good sense or, what is more to the point, very effective screen drama. The effect of playing so much with people's status (now alive and now dead, now both, etc.) is to rob them of reality. Our interest in them doesn't grow; we have to be kept eerily amused. And in this sort of playfulness Sartre shows at moments a genuinely uneasy touch. Our *first* initiation into an after-life of periwigged loungers on a busy street corner, of the newly dead pestering an oblivious passer-by; ghostly fingers running with an incredulous pang over the features

of a beggar wheezing into a flute (good God, he's *alive*!); the hopes and fruitless desires of the lovers dancing to a sad, simple tune by Auric under the park trees; the Dictator staring in his mirror, unwary of the throng of his victims who contemptuously observe every attitude and grimace: these are the sparks which only Sartre could have knocked from an unwieldly theme. The film, so far as its incongruities will allow, is brilliantly impressed on the eye. Jean Delannoy's direction makes the most of its chances, and from a distinguished cast Michel Presle stands out as a newcomer of ability.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

FALSTAFF

IT is wonderful to have *Falstaff* on our doorstep again, wonderful to renew acquaintance with the Fat Knight of Signor Stabile, most enterprising and courageous of Mr. Pomeroy to bring this taxing and hitherto not very popular piece into his cut-and-come-again all-the-year-round repertory. In *Don Giovanni* and *Falstaff* he has tackled two of opera's peaks, neither of them with anything like complete success, it is true, but both in such a way as to reveal their essential quality. The merits of this *Falstaff* are mainly the work of two men: Signor Erede, who conducted, not only avoided most of the score's innumerable pitfalls, but drew some delicate playing from his orchestra and secured a high degree of all-round accuracy (the final fugue went as well as I can ever remember); while as for Signor Stabile, his gusto and unfailing sense of style remain as captivating as ever. Of course his voice now feels the strain of so long a part: under pressure it sags, and he sometimes has to suggest, where once he positively achieved, the composer's intentions. But such failings seem to matter less in Sir John than in any other leading role I can think of; we don't expect the old bolting-hutch of beastliness to possess a voice of heroic ring; his whole personality is compounded of stratagems to defeat the hand of time, so why not vocal stratagems too? Ripeness is all, and nothing could be riper than this whole performance, its pointful gestures, precise timing, phrases larded with significance, prodigious variety of inflexion, and incomparably vivid enunciation of Boito's text.

There is a first-rate Mistress Ford (Emma Tegani) and a richly sonorous Pistol (Marco Stefanoni); the remaining performances, though admittedly on a lower level, mostly pass muster in an opera which demands good ensemble rather than individual excellence, but Mary Stewart's Mistress Quickly is unmusically sung, and her failure to find the true weight and incisiveness for the famous repeated phrases ("Reverenza!" etc.) told seriously against the effect of her big scenes. The name of Hein Heckroth aroused hopes for the scenery which were not fulfilled: Ford's garden was a hapless thing, God wot.

Professor Ebert produced. That ought to have been a guarantee of quality, but the virtues of his direction are in this instance swamped by a characteristically modern vice: the stage is far too fussy and fidgety. Why, for instance, is Bardolph allowed to make such a perpetual nuisance of himself? As for the women, never have wives been so monotonously and remorselessly merry, never have I known such ecstatic claspings and unclaspings of hands, such squeals of joy, such a continuous whirl of wimples and flutter of pink Plantaganet apparel; Nanetta, in particular, was hardly still for a moment. The trouble about all this fake vivacity is threefold: it is boring and irritating in itself; it distracts attention from the music and increases the difficulty of the conductor's task; and it often flies in the face of the expressed wishes of composer and librettist. Consider the scene between Falstaff and Alice in the second act. Boito's instructions are quite clear: the three other women are to make their exit, leaving the stage clear for the two principals. But at the Cambridge Theatre the conspirators hide behind the screen, continually poking their heads out to remind us what a romp it all is and how much they are enjoying it; believe it or not, they are allowed to intrude this intolerable distraction even into that 30-second jewel of mingled comedy and pathos, Falstaff's "Quand' ero paggio." In the last scene, Nanetta, the cause of so much previous fussation, becomes in turn the victim when her ravishing song to the fairies (quite nicely sung by Miss Bayan) is ruthlessly "masked" by streams of full size ballerinas weaving about the stage in close formation. What Boito and Verdi wanted here is nothing remotely resembling a professional ballet, but simply a double circle of little girls around Nanetta (with the grown-ups grouped on either side of the stage), who break into movement only when bidden to, at the same moment as they break into soft song, namely at the change to common time—and then into nothing more elaborate than a "danzetta lenta e molle"; at the corresponding moment in the second stanza they pluck some flowers and *slowly approach* Herne's Oak. Evidently the soprano solo itself is to be given in complete stillness; and a glance at the music shows why, and removes the last vestige of doubt from the mind of a sensitive musician; apart from the fragile charm of the melody, the accompaniment is made out of such gossamer material—violins in six parts, harp harmonics, and so forth—as cannot survive the faintest disturbance. To allow grown-up posturings to intrude on this magical page is an artistic crime which would never even have occurred to a producer of Verdi's day; for one thing, his Nanetta would have had something forcible to say; if you don't believe me ask Mme Zélie de Lussan, who sang the part at Covent Garden in 1894 and was present at the Cambridge first night! I make no apology for devoting so much attention to the restlessness of this production, because Ebert's authority is (justly) so great that his example is sure to encourage similar propensities in his far less gifted rivals. It seems to me axiomatic that nothing whatsoever, *absolutely nothing*, can be good opera production which gets in the way of the music; and that, in consequence, the final authority must always rest with the conductor.

However, grumpiness adieu! It may well be that in later performances some of these extravagancies and eccentricities will be toned down; even if they aren't, enough remains to render the journey to Seven Dials obligatory for every opera-goer within reach. As for *Lady Rohesia* at Sadler's Wells, it is difficult to see why the Governors thought it worth while to put on a dim little joke which might just go down at a small college in Eights Week, provided the entire audience were friends or relations of the performers.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

THE THEATRE

"Rocket to the Moon," at St. Martin's

Clifford Odets' new and unusual comedy is well worth seeing. Indeed it is worth seeing twice. It is excellently acted but not well produced. It is a play with a strong structure; the author has conceived its logical and unexpected conclusion before he began to write. Its weakness is in the second Act, which adds too little to what we know or have guessed in the first, and inadequately prepares us for the surprising developments of the characters at the conclusion. Miss Yolande Donlan holds the centre of the stage because she looks superb and knows exactly how to act a young woman on the make. When we discover she is so much more than this, we wonder whether our surprise is due to the writer, or to her failure to appreciate the subtlety of her symbolic part. Hugh Miller is excellent as the old and rich admirer, but he too is in a difficulty in showing how his last sincere attitude develops from its cynical beginning. Dr. Starkie, tormented by conscience and tempted (as who would not be with such a wife and such a seductive secretary?), is a solid and rounded character, and Ronald Simpson sustains to the end the mixture of weakness and decency. Ilona Ference, as the wife, battles well with an unsympathetic part. The perspiring and alcoholic Dr. Cooper, Frenchy, The Wolf and The Salesman, are secondary characters all clearly defined and admirably played. The production was spoilt by many easily remediable flaws. To convey the heat of a New York summer all and not merely one of the actors should look hot and the men should have followed the universal American habit of discarding their jackets. The constant drinking of water produced irritation rather than atmosphere. The lighting was bad and important lines were spoken almost in the wings and quite in the shadow. The play contains much wit and subtlety. The wit gets over, but much of the sutlety is lost.

A word in your ear

ARE YOU THINKING of cashing some of your savings and spending the money? Well, it is your money and you can spend it if you like.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Britain is a free country to-day, because you and millions more like you toiled and suffered to win that freedom as a heritage for your children and theirs to enjoy.

SO YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF, to those who died in war, and to their children, not to use your money in any way that will jeopardise the future for which so high a price was paid.

YOU WILL JEOPARDISE THE FUTURE if you save less and spend more before the battle for production is finally won. So — a word in your ear — *are you still going to cash those savings?*

ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL SAVINGS COMMITTEE

Correspondence

AMERICAN AID

SIR,—Your leading article, "If There Were No Dollars," appears to base itself on the assumption that by spurning Marshall aid, and adopting a more vigorously planned economy (which you immediately pre-determine as "totalitarian") it would mean that we should forfeit any American assistance.

This is, of course, completely untrue and no Left-wing anti-Marshallite has ever conceived it. The argument throughout has been that by adopting a policy more independent of America than the Marshall Plan will necessarily entail, Britain can establish bi-lateral links with other planned economies in Europe—East *and* West—and dovetail our needs with theirs to a considerable extent. By helping the soft-currency countries to help themselves we can all win through to Socialist solvency, free of American political ties, but still trading with the United States. The alternative to Marshall aid by no means precludes American assistance.

The Marshall Plan is based as much upon America's need to export as upon Europe's need for dollar aid. This becomes only too apparent if one studies the list of commodities (and the amounts) which Marshall aid will make available to Europe. Tobacco, dried eggs, etc., are given much more emphasis than cotton or steel (our most urgent raw material needs).

By reorientating our economic plan so to compel America to remove all political obligations from her economic aid (and who can now deny that such obligations exist?) we can influence the trend of prices on the American market—by using European markets as a price-yardstick; reduce her terms to ones of pure commerce—to the advantage of the pound-dollar exchange balance; and force the Americans to grant credits to countries, irrespective of their political colour. This would not only serve an economic end: it would go far to halt the trend towards war.

The Americans will never grant discrimination-free credits while they can obtain excellent business and political terms by way of such channels as Marshall aid—and with the willing co-operation of British Socialists. To argue that it would be easy for the United States to boycott a Socialist Europe with bulk purchasing to the fore is, in fact, no argument at all.

The Americans would never want to see a Socialist tariff barrier around Europe, preventing their exporting goods on reasonable terms, and vicariously provoking, within their own country, industrial strife. "Subservience to Wall Street" may or may not be jargon. But it is our very economic attitude which is fostering ideological blocs in Europe and helping the trend towards the third—and perhaps final!—holocaust.

GEOFFREY G. GOODMAN

7 St. James Mansions, N.10. (*B.Sc. Econ.*)

CATHOLICS AND POLITICS

SIR,—As a Catholic, I was amused by Professor Haldane's statement that we, unlike the Communists, have our politics dictated to us from abroad. But as a weekly reader of your excellent paper, I hope you will allow me to express my astonishment that "Critic" should actually believe such nonsense.

Surely he must know that Catholics as such have no politics. Why should they? Catholicism is a religion, not a political party. Moreover, it has been explicitly stated by the Popes that Catholics may join any political party, except, of course, the Communist Party, which is not so much a political party as a rival religion.

It is true, that Catholics acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope. This purely spiritual authority does not extend to political matters, as Lord Pakenham and Mr. Douglas Woodruff, as well as many other contrasted personalities, can testify. Indeed, it is only too evident that Catholics are disagreed on everything except their faith. The same can hardly be said for the Communists, who are required by infallible pronouncements from the Kremlin, not only to condemn the iniquities of the "big dollar boys" but also the errors of modernistic and bourgeois art.

However, it must be admitted that in times of crisis and persecution, the Catholic is often faced with a tragic dilemma. Such a situation existed in this country during the reign of Elizabeth, and exists, I should imagine, in the Catholic countries of Eastern Europe to-day. But faced with the prospect of extermination, all creatures obey the instinct of self-preservation; they strike out blindly, desperately. In seventeenth-century England, this instinct led to the Gunpowder Plot; in twentieth-century Eastern Europe it may well lead to armed conspiracy in conjunction with the Western Powers. In present-day Italy it leads to papal efforts to prevent a Communist victory in the elections.

In short, the Church only meddles with politics, when politics meddle with her.

Quidenham Hall, Norwich. RICHARD KEPPEL

THE PURGE

SIR,—There can be more than one view of the Government's decision to remove from "security" work those civil servants who are suspected of being associates of the Communist Party. But it is difficult to see how anyone can fail to feel concerned about the methods proposed. Alleged Communists or "fellow travellers" are to be dismissed, presumably on the recommendation of M.I.5, with no right of appeal to an impartial tribunal with full access to the facts.

During the war I had the opportunity of seeing something of the working of M.I.5, and what most impressed me was its inability to distinguish between Communists and the most apparently innocuous members of the Labour Party. There were many Labour M.P.s (never accused of being "fellow travellers") whom M.I.5 regarded as unsuitable for confidential employment. The number includes a junior Minister who to my certain knowledge had never been a Communist and was indeed remarkable for the violence of his anti-Communist views even at that time when it was so much less fashionable than to-day.

It would be a pity to have all supporters of the Labour Party purged from the Civil Service.

Balliol College, Oxford. CHRISTOPHER HILL

SIR,—While many of your readers may be in disagreement with the policy of purging the Civil Service of anti-democratic elements, announced by the Prime Minister in the House this week, few can deny that such a policy is logically based. In fact, in order to be consistent, and to make England safe for democracy, the purge should be extended to the police, the press, the universities and the nationalised industries. It is possible that some of the Ministers who so recently were dismayed by events in Prague may feel constrained to follow the example of their Czechoslovak democrat counterparts, but this is surely a small price to pay for the added degree of national security which we would have achieved.

Let us not be deterred by appeals to tradition, or taints of English hypocrisy, but institute Action Committees forthwith, so that the traitors who masquerade their Russian sympathies under the cloak of a belief in "the liberty of the individual," whether in the Conservative Central Office or in the Trade Unions, may be immediately exposed, and treated as they deserve.

PETER F. ONYON

Royal College of Science, London, S.W.7.

RUSSIAN POLICY

SIR,—It is a pity that in contemplating Russian conduct we do not try to think in their terms rather than in our own. For instance, the British and American press have recently exclaimed in horror at the duplicity of the Russians in 1939. But a year earlier the State Department, with the connivance of the Foreign Office, had begun to conduct the double-faced diplomacy with the Jews and Arabs to which in its existing phase you referred in a recent issue.

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CONSIDERABLE EXPANSION

THE annual general meeting of the National Bank of India Ltd. will be held on March 30 in London.

The following is an extract from the statement by the chairman, Mr. J. K. Michie, which has been circulated with the report and accounts:—

The balance-sheet shows very considerable and satisfactory expansion of approximately £8,000,000 since the end of 1946, the total now reaching the record figure of almost £77,000,000. The increase, which is largely due to the expansion of Current, Deposit and Other balances, is the more remarkable when one considers the greatly enlarged demand for accommodation as is shown by the rise of over £6,000,000 in the total of Advances, etc. It will be of interest to you to know that at 31st December, 1938, the date of our last pre-war accounts, the total of the balance-sheet was £33,395,000.

We have added £200,000 to our Reserve Fund, the larger part of which comes from Reserves previously set aside. We feel that it is right in times like these to show our shareholders that the financial stability of the Bank is steadily growing.

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Mr. Bartley C. Crum (*Behind the Silken Curtain*, Gollancz, 1947) gives chapter and verse: "According to the file," (State Dept. Confidential Communication on Palestine) "since Sept. 15th, 1938, each time a promise was made to American Jewry regarding Palestine the State Department promptly sent messages to the Arabs discounting it . . . This file confirmed the charge of double-dealing that had been hurled at both the United States and Great Britain."

Molotov vis-a-vis Ribbentrop was, from a Communist point of view, clearly acting with common sense when he preferred to buy time from Germany rather than trust to Chamberlain and Daladier. He was representing a country hard-pressed for twenty years and in a desperate situation. But the U.S.A. was in no such situation then, still less to-day, and was, and is, a nation that professes to conduct its affairs according to conventional standards of honesty. So do we. Can we be surprised, then, if the Kremlin regards the Government spokesmen and the press of America and Britain as hypocrites?

Lamorna, near Penzance. JOHN ARMSTRONG

DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

SIR,—Mr. Tom Sargant says that his "main goal is the achievement of a just society in which men behave to each other like members of a family." So is mine. Where we differ is that he apparently thinks that that state of affairs can be brought about by treating as members of the family, here and now, people like Tories, Fascists, and "rugged individualists" who despise and reject his ideal, whereas I regard such people as enemies to be fought and beaten how we can, where we can, when we can.

Et ego in Arcadia vixi. I too was once a Social Democrat, believing that Socialism could be won with kid gloves and without tears. My eyes were opened in 1931, when the "bankers' ramp" threw a spanner into the works of Parliamentary democracy and showed how the capitalists dealt even with such a meek and mild Labour Government as Ramsay MacDonald's. The process has been repeated since 1945, with the difference that they now find it unnecessary even to turn out the Labour Government. It eats out of their hand.

I am glad Mr. Sargant has the grace to recognise that it is the "stupid fault" of Social Democrats that Communists are what they are. I wish him well, naturally, in his enterprise of building a Socialist Society on his "values." But I am afraid Wall Street won't let him. They still believe in rugged individualism over in America; and the Marshall Plan has strings to it. Socialism can be built only by hard fighting. And, in case Mr. Sargant says I am just a Moscow gramophone, let me remind him that our difference is far older than 1917. In every revolution there is a Gironde and a Mountain; and it is always the Gironde, the Liberals, the Third Force that get squeezed out, and the Mountain that wins through and does the job. So it was in 1793, so it was in 1917, so it is in Eastern Europe now, and so it will always be until the world is changed.

ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON

53 Victoria Road, Oxford.

DEVOLUTION AND SCOTLAND

SIR,—May I try to explain to the readers of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION why the White Paper on Scotland is such a disappointment? We realise that it is very well meant and that there will be certain administrative and legislative changes in the direction of devolution. There will also be more committees and things. Of course, any committee *may* be able to do something helpful if it is prepared to make itself sufficiently disagreeable. It *may* make a difference that Scottish Bills should go straight to the Scottish M.P.s at Westminster.

But nothing touches the thing which is wrong with Scotland and which we hoped might be put right by—for one thing—a Scottish parliament meeting in Scotland. I don't think such a parliament would necessarily make much legislative difference to our lives. But it is wanted to fill a gap in our hearts or, more accurately, perhaps, in the unconscious and preconscious parts of our minds. This gap was left after we were overwhelmed by English, and Anglicised Presbyterian, influences. This emptiness makes us unfit to make our right contribution to European civilisation, in fact, most of us have to leave our country before we can fill the gap with such other loyalties and images as will suffice for the building of confidence and courage to think and act.

If this emptiness were merely a reasonable and cerebral one, it could be helped by such measures as are now proposed. But it is not. However much we Socialists like the idea of being entirely rational beings, we cannot get over the fact that the workings of our unconscious are no more rational than other people's. We ask for and need unreasonable things, such as the mythology of nationhood (something which is nothing to do with national sovereignty and can fit perfectly into a federal Western Europe). If we had that, many of us believe, with some historical and psychological justification, that a number of Scots people, who are at present largely wasting themselves in emptiness and frustration, would be able to give their best to Scotland and the world, and that everyone in Scotland might be slightly more likely to lead a higher grade kind of life. That is the core of the Scottish nationalism which is inevitably part of the make-up of almost all sensitive Scots people. It has had no satisfaction from the present proposals. Is it so impossible for you folk in the South to understand?

NAOMI MITCHISON

Carradale House, Argyll.

SARAWAK

SIR,—Mr. Edelman, in his Parliamentary Diary, repeats the Colonial Office's claim that my brother, Anthony Brooke, is a "Pretender." As he is not here to speak for himself may I be allowed to answer this charge. The only "pretence" or claim my brother is making is that the people of Sarawak should be free to express through constitutional channels their demand that the charges of illegality and corruption repeatedly brought against the cession proceedings by bodies representative of native opinion should be investigated and that they should be free to demand what form of government they like, including, if they wish, the restoration of their nationality and independence. How far they are from enjoying such freedom can be seen from a paragraph in the official *Sarawak Gazette* stating that two Dayaks were recently fined ten dollars each (a large sum to a poor Dayak) for the awful offence of refusing to carry a District Officer's baggage, with the warning that "such cases might have been overlooked in other circumstances, but in view of certain anti-cession elements now working amongst the Land Dayaks it was considered necessary as a matter of policy to call the defaulters to account." It is one of the claims of the Colonial Office that the Dayaks, as opposed to the anti-cessionist Malays, support cession.

The Colonial Office bases its denial to my brother of the normal legal rights of British citizenship, and its vague charge that he is a "Pretender," on statements which it alleges he made to the press before leaving London in December, 1946, announcing that he was going to claim the ceded raj for himself. This is untrue: what he said, in a statement issued to the press and correctly transmitted by Reuter, was that he was leaving "on an urgent invitation from the Malay National Union and the Dayak Association to consult the wishes of the native communities in relation to the restoration of Sarawak's independence." This does not constitute him as a "Pretender" nor even a demand for the restoration of the Brooke raj whose heir-at-law is not, in any case, my brother but my father.

The widespread native wish that "serious allegations of constitutional and ethical impropriety" during the cession proceedings—stubbornly ignored by the Colonial Office—should be judicially investigated was repeated three weeks ago in a formal

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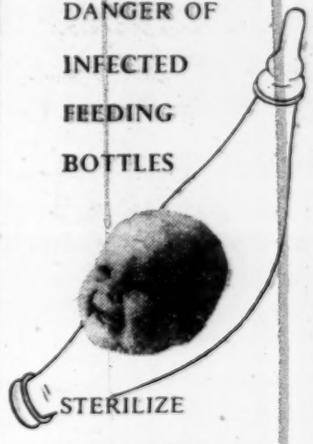

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MILTON

ASK YOUR CHEMIST FOR LEAFLET

Petition to the Crown from the Sarawak Dayak Association, the Malay National Union of Sarawak, and thirteen other native Associations claiming to represent the overwhelming majority of the indigenous peoples and, in particular, of the literate classes. The petition, which invokes the Atlantic Charter, also pleads for the restoration of Sarawak independence under British protection and complains that Sarawak nationals are now described in passports as "British subjects by annexation." My brother, as the citizen of a free country, is as entitled as anyone else to support such claims and to exercise the legal rights of a British subject in doing so, even though he stands in the line of succession to the former raj. ANNE BRYANT

18 Rutland Gate, S.W.7.

SOVIET ARTISTS

SIR,—Mr. Martin Mitchell's humourless and poorly reasoned attack on Raymond Mortimer's article must not go unchallenged. Art, to whatever fundamental criticism it is subjected by the Central Committee of the Communist Party, remains the aesthetic expression of a personal attitude. Whether it should, for example, deal with man's heroic struggle with his environment, and consequently flourish as a positive force (to quote Mr. Mitchell's jargon) is the personal affair of the artist and no one else, least of all that of a philosopher or a politician. Whether a particular work has succeeded in its particular aim is for the individual critic to decide on the basis of his personal aesthetic.

Mr. Mitchell wisely refrains from an assault on Raymond Mortimer's strongest redoubt, namely the impossibility of conveying an ideology in music, and the consequent utter absurdity of condemning any music, however unintelligible to oneself, as not conforming to a given ideology. One can sympathise with the Commissars and peasants in their bewilderment at the recent work of Shostakovitch and his copenitents without at all lessening the force of the contention that the latter should compose as they please. The logical outcome of this arbitrary meddling with aesthetic standards in the U.S.S.R. is their reduction to the lowest common denominator, that of the totally uninformed. It is fortunate that contemporary criticism of Beethoven's last quartets was not so conducted: else these profoundest of musical utterances could hardly have survived. JOHN AIKEN

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to the article by Mr. Raymond Mortimer in your issue of March 6th.

I have not space to enter a controversy on general musical principles, which would require a re-statement of the most elementary question, if Mr. Mortimer's musical-aesthetic remarks in this article are to be taken as a fair specimen of his knowledge of the subject.

But there is one paragraph to which I would respectfully draw your attention, as I do not feel that it should have been allowed to pass in a journal of any standing.

Mr. Mortimer, comparing the criticism of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. of certain composers with that of the Holy Inquisition, uses the expression "Rather than be sent to a chain-gang, etc.," and later speaks of the "vileness of the authorities who stuck at nothing in their eagerness to make these men—i.e., the Soviet composers—tell lies." As the personal friend and admiring colleague of two of the composers in question, Shostakovich and Khatchaturian (I have not the honour of Prokoviev's personal friendship, though I have met him on several occasions) I find it distasteful to hear them described as liars. I also find it very difficult to believe that Mr. Mortimer is so ill informed that he can seriously make the comparison. He evidently wishes to mislead his public—no doubt he underestimates their intelligence. People are always inclined to judge others by their own standards. But there are limits below which English journalism has not yet sunk. Probably our subservience to the U.S.A. in economic policy will bring a deterioration in this direction in the cultural field in general and in journalism in particular.

It seems a pity that Mr. Mortimer should be the banner bearer of such shameful degradation, especially as THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION has in the past maintained some standards of objectivity.

ALAN D. BUSH

THE THEATRE CONFERENCE

SIR,—In your issue of March 13th, the Joint Secretaries of the above Conference ask me to "withdraw unreservedly" (on the grounds that it was "untrue") a statement (which I did not make) in my letter appearing in your previous issue.

I have nothing to withdraw and I did not imply that important documents had been "suppressed."

In striving to account for the inaccuracy of Mr. J. B. Priestley's explanations for the non-attendance of my Committee at his Conference I suggested alternate hypotheses. One, in Mr. Priestley's favour, that the organisers *may* have omitted to (not, did not) bring to his notice the letters in which our reasons were given; the second that he had seen but chosen to ignore these letters and given his own fanciful version.

The Secretaries in their haste to exculpate themselves now explain that they kept Mr. Priestley "fully informed of all the managerial communications." This I fear implants Mr. Priestley firmly upon the other horn of the dilemma where I am content to leave him to argue the point with his—as he has described them—"youngish enthusiasts."

The Secretaries' other insinuation that my Committee tried to persuade Sir Stafford Cripps not to take part in the Conference is childish nonsense; and their suggestion that my Committee should place its "invaluable experience" at the disposal of the Theatre Conference Standing Committee leads me to suggest that we may prefer to direct it to other more productive and, to us, acceptable channels.

WALTER PAYNE
Chairman,
Theatres' National Committee.

[The Joint Hon. Secretaries write:—"At different times Mr. Payne or his colleagues have given three or more 'reasons' for not attending the Conference. It is obvious that only the full text of letters exchanged will clear up this controversy. Anyone is at liberty to see these in our files and judge for himself. But recrimination is unproductive. Let us cease calling 'sour grapes.' Let us also refrain from prejudging, as Mr. Payne is seeking to do, the new Standing Committee to which formal invitations have not yet been issued. The voting of the delegates who wished that the Managers should be represented on this Committee was *unanimous*."
—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

PROFESSOR HALDANE

SIR,—In your issue of March 20th you credit me with the statement that I am doing important Government research. I do not think for a moment that I made this statement, which is certainly untrue. In fact, I am on two official committees where I have access to secret documents. As persons holding my political opinions are rather frequently misreported, and then accused of lying, or worse, may I ask you to publish this correction.

University College, London. J. B. S. HALDANE

[In the statement to which we referred, Professor Haldane said: "I am working on two Government scientific sub-committees, one of which deals with under-water physiology. They don't pay me anything, and they can throw me off them if they want to. But if they'd thrown me off six months ago, they might not have had certain increased efficiency in under-water craft." Of what does Professor Haldane complain? Is his contention that this work is not important, or that it is not research, or what?
—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

"I MISLIKED *The Mastersingers* as sorely as you," I said the other day to my friend Mr. Shawe-Taylor. "It was the outshapen uptippening of a bad tide; but some folk are wont to forsend all deemstery of gleecraft as inwoning." As he seemed a trifle taken aback, I explained that I was trying to talk upon the principles laid down in a book I was reading called *English Speech-Craft*. It is the work of the Rev. William Barnes, whose tireless efforts to reform the English language are generally forgotten, though he enjoys a modest fame—less, indeed, than he merits—for his fresh, melodious, delightful poems, mostly in the dialect of Dorset. He had a daughter who, under the name of Leader Scott, made books about Italy (e.g., *A Nook in the Apennines*), and it was she who wrote his biography, a deplorable affair from which, however, one can get some glimmerings of character no less endearing than extraordinary.

William Barnes was born in 1801, the son of a poor tenant-farmer. (His family had come down in the world, like that of every other humbly born Victorian who made good, if we can believe their biographies.) He went to a local school till he was about thirteen, when he began clerking in a lawyer's office. His gifts were various and outstanding. He wrote verses and farces, he painted and engraved, he played the piano, violin and flute, he was a good mathematician. At the age of twenty-two he turned schoolmaster, and four years later he was able to marry and set up a school of his own. He began writing for periodicals; he published books on the Mathematical Principle of Hanging Doors, on Statics and Hydrodynamics; he gradually made himself acquainted with no fewer than sixty-seven languages. The first volume of poems in the Dorset dialect appeared in 1844; in 1847 the offer of a living persuaded him to be ordained, though the income was very small; he remained lamentably poor until he obtained a Civil List pension in 1861, and later the living of Came, near Dorchester.

His Dorset verses won the admiration of Patmore, Palgrave, and Tennyson; later of Thomas Hardy, who was his neighbour, and of Edmund Gosse. (Some of his poems in ordinary English are also remarkable, especially for metrical devices suggested by the study of Persian.) Despite poverty and the early death of his beloved wife, Barnes enjoyed a deserved and enviable happiness, a life at once full and tranquil. The convulsions into which other clergymen were thrown by the horrid conjectures of Pusey and Colenso seem to have left him unruffled. The talk of Disestablishment, it is true, did rouse his choler, but then this seems to have loomed in the Victorian imagination as a menace no less hideous than is to us the atomic bomb. Usually, however, Barnes was serenely busy with verses and languages and flowers and birds and local antiquities. How the amiable sun burnishes the nineteenth-century scene, when we read of long July drives in wagonettes to Portisham or Fizburg, attentive ladies clustering round the parson as he admires a cromlech or directs the opening of a barrow, and discourses on place-names and "stonen" tools, the loyal Iceni and the tactics of Cassibelaunus.

The rectory of Came is as picturesque a little house as one could hope to see, with a thatched verandah running round it to offer shelter from whatsoever wind. The garden, when once I had the luck to go there, was enamelled with flowers, the rooms lambent with old and cherished china: Barnes's kindly Muse could have revisited contentedly her ancient haunts, and found there another poet-scholar reading in his Jacobean folios. Barnes never found the days long enough for all he had to do. There were long walks to visit sick parishioners, on which he would sometimes carry a pocket-font. There were verses to polish, and the *Song of Solomon* to translate into the Dorset dialect for the private press of Prince Lucien Bonaparte. There were evenings devoted to the study of Chinese and Damulican, Cherimissian and Chippeway; there was the alluring possibility that in Sardinian he had found a clue to Etruscan. Goodness and learning are here allied with a simplicity of feeling that to most of us has become almost unimaginable, though it lingers among some Victorian survivors. Here is Gosse's masterly account of a visit to him when he was near his end:

> Hardy and I went on Monday last to Came Rectory, where he lies bedridden. It is curious that he is dying as picturesquely as he lived. We found him in bed in his study, his face turned to the window, where the light came streaming in through flowering plants, his brown books on all sides of him save one, the wall behind him being hung with old green tapestry. He had a scarlet bed-gown on, a kind of soft biretta of dark red wool on his head, from which his long, white hair escaped on to the pillow; his grey beard, grown very long, upon his breast; his complexion, which you recollect as richly bronzed, has become blanched by keeping indoors, and is now waxily white where it is not waxily pink; the blue eyes, half shut, restless under languid lids . . . I wish I could paint for you the strange effect of this old, old man, lying in cardinal scarlet on his white bed, the only bright spot in the gloom of all these books.

Barnes was the most lively minded of men, always starting some nimble hare. He practised a secret method of cleaning old pictures; he learnt to rule horoscopes; he produced the most unorthodox considerations upon paper currency; he invented some hinged swimming-shoes (precursors of those used in the war); he deduced from the musical scale a mathematical principle of "harmonic proportion" which he applied to wainscoting and picture-framing; he founded upon his observations of Nature a theory of colour.

Barnes's pre-eminent interest was philology, upon which he published a number of books which seem to have been little appreciated by other experts; and he attached special importance to a volume entitled *Tiw* (the name of the eponymous god of the Teutons). His concern with language was more than theoretical. He became increasingly possessed with a longing to expurgate from the English language all the foreign words that had crept into it; and by "foreign" he meant "non-Teutonic." "English in its foreign-worded fulness," he declared, "is a speech only for the more learned, and foreign to unschooled men, so that the sermon and the book are half lost to their minds." True enough; and the Book of Common Prayer itself no longer deserves to be called vernacular. But liturgies and even sermons may gain by being enigmatic: there was once a parson much complained of by his rural flock because he never quoted Hebrew from the pulpit, as his predecessor had done, calling it "the immediate language of the Holy Ghost." Moreover, we may doubt whether Barnes's Anglo-Saxon revivals and coinings would have been any less liable than the most elaborate Johnsonianisms to moider the Dorset hinds and make them scratch their polls. Some of his suggestions have charm, *starlet* for asterisk, and *dapster* for someone who is *au fait*. But what of the sentence with which I began this page, in which *outshapen=perfect, uptippening=culmination, tide=season, forsend=dismiss, deemstery=criticism, gleecraft=music* and *inwoning=subjective*. Here are some further specimens of the vocabulary advocated by Barnes: *yeargyld* (*annuity*), *onhenge* (*appendix*), *wortlore* (*botany*), *reekle-vat* (*censer*), *two-horned redeship* (*dilemma*), *freghost* (*electricity*), *forestonening* (*fossil*), *incarvelling* (*insect*), *hearsomeness* (*obedience*), *folkwain* (*omnibus*), *somely* (*plural*), *foredraught* (*programme*), *fourwinkle* (*quadrangle*). His *Outline of English Speech-Craft* is a grammar with all the terms teutonised: consonants become *breath-pennings*, vowels *free-breathings*; and here is his definition of a fallacy: "a flaw or an unsoundness in redecraft is a thought-putting which is unsound or cheatsome or guilesome." It is not clear how rigorously Barnes would have wished to apply these racial laws of language. He might have admitted to citizenship words like *priest, wine, cheese* and *mile*, despite their degraded origin, since they were already domiciled here in the glorious days of Eadwig and Ælgifu. But would this indulgence have been extended to post-Conquest arrivals like *aunt* and *face* and *catch* and *act*? Presumably not, for *river*—which has been English since the thirteenth century—was among the words for which he was disappointed to find no "Saxon-English" equivalent.

Teutonism became quite a vogue in the Victorian Age. The Romantic Revival was in part a revolt against classical antiquity; and later the conduct of the Second Empire did more than is often realised to mislead the English about the character of the French, in whom they could see little but vanity and levity. Carlyle was the most effective of the pro-Germans; Meredith is another great writer whose style was disfigured by German models; William Morris became more and more addicted to the Nordic vocabulary. Then there was Francis Newman who translated Homer into a style made as Anglo-Saxon as he could; Matthew Arnold teased him for delighting in such words as "dapper-greaved," "bragly" and "bulkin." The doughtiest of all our Teutons was the historian Freeman, of whom there is a delicious caricature in Lytton Strachey's essay on Froude. A burly, big-bearded, baggy-clothed paterfamilias, half-bully and half-baby, he was the most puzzling mixture of Radical ideals and positively Nazi prejudices. His language about Jews, Negroes and Irishmen was maniac; and his hatred of the French was such that immediately after their defeat in 1871 he crossed the Channel in order to "crow" over them (his own word). He doted hardly less than Barnes upon the Anglo-Saxons, and liked to talk of "snuffed-out spitfires" instead of "extinct volcanoes."

The attempt to revive obsolete Anglo-Saxon words seems to me commendable, so they be not too uncouth—and for the same reason that the wish to expel Romance words seems to me foolish. Glorious as is the word *horizon*, which dear Barnes wished to banish, his suggested substitute, *sky-sill* would be an enrichment of our tongue. It is to the size and variety of the English vocabulary that English literature owes much of its splendour. We have, I fancy, some 30 per cent. more words than the French, and for this we ought to be thankful. All our greatest writers have been masters in the art of setting side by side words that set one another off by contrasts of weight and shape and association, aptly choosing them here from the Teutonic vocabulary, there from the Romance, in order to achieve variety in tessellation. Look at one out of thousands of instances from Shakespeare: "The odds is gone, And there is nothing left remarkable Beneath the visiting moon." Wordsworth again, for all his protests against Augustan diction, was no less artful than Milton in his use of words imported from the Mediterranean:

> Apparelled in celestial light,
> The glory and the freshness of a dream.
> The thought of our past years in me doth breed
> Perpetual benediction.
>
> In our halls is hung
> Armoury of the invincible knights of old . . .

If Barnes's wild plan were realised, it would not only abolish such characteristic grandeurs as these, but would degrade the very beauties of Anglo-Saxon that it aimed at exalting. How far it is possible to think our native words nobler than those which have come to us from the South must seem doubtful to the reader of Shakespeare, Milton and Wordsworth, or—for that matter—of Browne, Gibbon and Newman. But certainly there are some Anglo-Saxon words that one would be sorry to see torn from their princely seclusion, *joyful*, for instance, and *sorrowful* and *wrath*. While poets in each generation rightly introduce into poetic diction words previously thought inadmissible, it is to the good, I suggest, that some words should be kept apart, undimmed by daily use.

One common word, by the way, for which Barnes sought in vain to find an Anglo-Saxon equivalent is *civilisation*. The reason for this is obvious.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

PROMETHEUS

The "Prometheus Bound" of Aeschylus. A new translation by REX WARNER. *The Bodley Head.* 6s.

"On the face of it," writes Mr. Rex Warner, in an excellent preface to his new translation, of *Prometheus Bound* "the play appears as a glorification of the revolutionary who, strong in his own mind and convinced of the justice of his cause, will never bow to oppression."

On the face of it. That is the point. For in fact it has never been possible, lacking the two other plays of the Promethean trilogy, to be incontrovertibly certain where Aeschylus stood, in his conception of the Titan hero. Almost one might suspect that there had been something wilful, in the Freudian sense, in the loss of the *Fire-Bringing Prometheus* and of the *Prometheus Unbound*; since scholarship and historical probability both suggest that in them, especially in the latter, the authority of Zeus was at the last upheld, whatever credit was given to the nobility of Prometheus. Whereas we, following Shelley, tend to view Prometheus as the supreme martyr of enlightened humanism—a kind of near-omnipotent liberal technocrat—ultimately triumphant over tyranny, personified by Zeus. But this was not at all the idea of the Greeks. Behind the principle of freedom, which Prometheus stood for, they saw also necessity. This was not precisely moral; the dynasty of Zeus was new and harsh and let loose a great deal of arbitrary cruelty and injustice; nevertheless, by virtue of very existence and unavoidableness, necessity in some sense partook of morality, and moral impulse was obliged to compromise with it. If it would not, it overreached itself, and actually ceased to be noble—becoming instead punishable and presumptuous. Mr. Warner's discussion illuminates these points. When Aeschylus, with ironic force, shows the Titan prophesying Zeus's fall, he himself riveted helplessly to a rock, he may indeed be dramatising nobility, but he is also making the point, not heard often in literature since his time, that a degree of derangement, which cannot be considered high or moral, is involved in the mere tilting against necessity. Necessity, as a philosophic principle, is to-day more than ever out of fashion, since we see it invoked to condone crimes and violences. Nevertheless, it is there. Whithead, reflecting upon our own time, has restated the Greek view most powerfully:

> The massive habits of physical nature, its iron laws, determine the scene for the sufferings of men. Birth and death, heat, cold, hunger, separation, disease, the general impractibility of purpose, all bring their quota to imprison the souls of women and of men. Our experiences do not keep step with our hopes . . . The essence of freedom is the practicability of purpose . . . The literary exposition of freedom deals mainly with the frills. The Greek myth was more to the point. Prometheus did not bring to mankind freedom of the press. He procured fire, which obediently to human purpose cooks and gives warmth. In fact, freedom of action is a primary human need.

Shelley, refusing to envisage a "catastrophe so feeble as that of reconciling the Champion with the Oppressor of Mankind" (the word "Oppressor" begs the question) would have made little of this. His Zeus is a cipher. When required to fall, he simply falls—making a very feeble speech. The speech cannot help being feeble, because there has been no conflict, it is the breath of omnipotent fantasy which blasts him. This absence of bone-structure leaves in his play an airborne skimpiness, which contrasts disadvantageously with Aeschylus's testy and gnomic pith. He wrote, we know, in Spring, "under the bright blue sky of Rome." Why not? But there is also Winter—with Spring a good way behind. It is of this Winter, of the reality of it in human problems, that the Greek poet forces us to stay aware. Shelley, with his pastels and pervasive femininity, soothing back into unawareness, scattered through his verse the germs of a disease, which ever since has been eating the heart out of modern liberal philosophy: the disease of wishing unpleasant things away.

Furthermore, the sense of great issues in conflict, which gives substance to the older play, gives also a deeper colouring to the portrait of Prometheus himself. Undiluted heroism is less dramatically interesting than Shelley thought. The significance of Prometheus, in Aeschylus's presentation, strikes deeper, into a problem as profound as Oedipus's. Heroic, benevolent, wise, pitted against a tyrant's insatiable suspiciousness, he is also that self-destructively clever person, who can see every aspect of a problem except his own. He can tell Io that she'll have a sea named after her, give friendly advice to Oceanus, and score debating-points off Hermes; nevertheless, there he is, riveted to the rock. "If you're so smart, why ain't you rich?" Hermes at last tells him (I quote Mr. Warner's version) that he is "brain-sick, seriously." It is the truth. And Aeschylus charts the progressive stages of this "brain-sickness": the wish-fulfilment fantasy, the sufferer's enjoyment of his suffering, his paranoid extension of blame to others not responsible for it, his weakened hold on reality, his delusion that every celestial purpose is directed against him personally, as if nothing else mattered, and, as climax, a positive willing of universal disaster—

> "Let a blast blow
> To make earth's depths totter down to their roots!"

rather than that his stubborn pride's flag should be lowered. Yes, this saviour of men, thief of fire, inventor of astronomy, medicine, mathematics, and the frying-pan, will, when told he has gone too far, see them all perish, sooner than retract. A hero, seems to say Aeschylus; but a fool also, and a dangerous fool.

For Mr. Warner, obsessed, as other of his writings have shown, with the problem of power—power colliding with freedom—the translating of this power-obsessed play was an appropriate task. His version lacks a force which might perhaps have been expected from it. Careful to avoid false eloquence, sparing us the "belikes," "behests," "utmost bounds," and other stage-properties of bygone scholarship, he forfeits also something of its vigour and compressions, and lapses at times into a too-weary casualness. He has unrolled the tight-packed Aeschylean cigarette, and spread the tobacco loose before us, to be sniffed and looked at. This itself is a service; a greater one might be to write the modern Prometheus play, its stage post-war Europe. The Greek myth is pregnant with the political dilemma of 1948.

GILES ROMILLY

CRIME

The Bells at Old Bailey. By DOROTHY BOWERS. *Hodder & Stoughton.* 8s. 6d.

With Murder in Mind. By ELIZABETH FERRARS. *Collins.* 8s 6d.

Variations on a Theme of Murder. By CLODAGH JARVIE. *Thanet Press.* 6s.

Death by Proxy. By JOHN CROSBY. *John Langdon.* 8s. 6d.

Scarecrow. By EATON K. GOLDTHWAITE. *Jarrolds.* 8s. 6d.

The Outsiders. By A. E. MARTIN. *Nimmo.* 8s. 6d.

The Jaws of Death. By LEE THAYER. *Hurst and Blackett.* 8s. 6d.

P. Moran, Operative. By PERCIVAL WILDE. *Gollancz.* 8s. 6d.

Rogues' Gallery. Edited by ELLERY QUEEN. *Faber.* 10s. 6d.

The Swan Sang Once. By MARJORIE CARLETON. *Michael Joseph.* 8s. 6d.

The Case of the Laughing Jesuit. By MICHAEL BURT. *Ward, Lock.* 9s. 6d.

This list is for the steady dram-drinkers and old soaks—I mean those who cannot face the horrors of life from one week to another without a furtive swig at the horrors of literature. Incidentally, their number must be on the increase, since the state of the world has never been less conducive to curing the habit. For anyone who wants to read a detective story for other than these medicinal purposes, *The Bells at Old Bailey* is the only book that can be recommended. Miss Bowers treats the English language with respect and intelligence; she says what she means with ease and precision in a flow of very acceptable prose. Moreover, her female characters grow spontaneously from a genuine artistic sense, and can never be trusted to remain mere cogs in the mechanism of her plots: they have lives of their own regardless of the requirements of a murder story. Of course, such precocity is dangerous and disruptive in detection; and Miss Bowers often has a struggle to keep the machine going with her recalcitrant team of women. In *The Bells at Old Bailey*, where anonymous letters and five deaths by suicide proclaim the existence of a village blackmailer ripe for murder, the red herrings get restive and have to be given a long gallop across country before Miss Bowers can tidy up the situation to her satisfaction.

Psycho-analysis has been going strong for the last thirty years, but our old-fashioned authors have only just cottoned on to it. Now that it figures in the Hollywood repertoire we may expect a spate of it, since detection is always written with one eye cocked on the film rights. The entire business of *With Murder in Mind* is transacted on the analytical couch. A worried lady visits a psychiatrist with the suspicion that her husband has murdered his father. Once down on the couch, there she lies for ten sessions unburdening herself of the evidence. Nobody will be surprised when old Oedipus is trotted out as the villain of the piece. Miss Ferrars handles her cases with positively embarrassing facility.

Miss Jarvie is a musical lady, who pops her body into a double-bass case after an Albert Hall concert. She writes with great vigour and freshness out of sheer high spirits; and despite the maidenly blushes of her heroine, does not hesitate to attribute a downright Freudian motive to her criminal. *Variations on a Theme of Murder* well deserves an audition.

"Death comes swiftly and mysteriously to a Chelsea flat." This banal blurb is the appropriate prelude to the hackneyed proceedings in *Death by Proxy*. But, if Mr. Crosby hopes to keep up the mystery, he should not have allowed a small black spider to be depicted on his dust-cover. The writing is adequate but verbose; and the solution no more startling than the spider. This is beginners' detection—or for readers who enjoy the easy mastery of mind over matter.

Scarecrow is small-town murder in Connecticut. It was composed, we are told, while the author was balancing his typewriter on a tree-stump in an atoll of the South Pacific. Despite the handicap, Mr. Goldthwaite knocks off a plot in the contemporary American idiom as if he had never left home. Is the scarecrow, a man whose face has become unrecognisable from war injuries, the missing son of the richest man in town or not? And why does his arrival lead to so much murder? The answers are not too difficult, provided your eyes are kept skinned for the inconspicuous appearance of two small clues shaped like—but that would be telling!

Australian detection, so far as it has come my way, bears a marked resemblance to Australian burgundy—a jolly colour, a strong but crude aroma, a claim to be a wholesome stimulant, and a lingering flavour of iron filings. *The Outsiders* maintains that tradition. The circus freaks, among whom a murderous blackmailer gets to work, are as jolly, pungent and disarmingly wholesome in their home life as you could wish. Moreover, Mr. Martin saves up a neat surprise for his *dénouement*. But all the same the book leaves a ferruginous taste in the mouth.

The Jaws of Death are those of an enormous alligator, displayed on the dust-cover, and reserved for the villian on the last page but one: otherwise they have no bearing whatever on the story. Mr. Thayer's latest Peter Clancy plot is staged in a Florida swamp, and, apart from the

exotic environment, runs along orthodox lines—or, shall we say, tramlines. The motive is rather too plain, and the murderer rather too conspicuous; otherwise no comment is needed.

P. Moran, Operative, is essentially comic detection. If you have read Hyman Kaplan and find him funny, you will roar with laughter over Peter Moran's half-witted brilliance in reaching the right conclusions by false reasoning.

With *Rogues' Gallery* we leave detection. The 600 pages of this omnibus contain 31 "crook" stories of very uneven merit, mostly by American authors; introduced and punctuated with a fusillade of self-advertisement on the part of Ellery Queen, in deplorable taste.

Finally, I can recommend two thrillers. *The Swan Sang Once* is a triumph of long-drawn-out suspense. Can a woman be induced to sing one particular song that will sign her death-warrant? In *The Case of the Laughing Jesuit*, Roger Poynings travels from Sussex to Kashmir and back again on one of his picaresque adventures with wine, women and MI5. Michael Burt uses the language of the dominant male with extreme assurance.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

NEW POETRY

The Kid. By CONRAD AIKEN. *Lehmann.* 5*s.*
One Times One. By E. E. CUMMINGS. *Horizon.* 8*s.* 6*d.*
Unarm, Eros. By TERENCE TILLER. *Hogarth.* 5*s.*
Boding Day. By EWART MILNE. *Muller.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Not long after the landing of the *Mayflower* at "Plymouth" in 1620, a young Cambridge (Eng.) B.A., William Blackstone by name, reached America and bought from the Indians the future site of Boston. There the next batch of colonists in 1630 were surprised and annoyed to find him in possession. The innocent Blackstone

> to his own cost played the generous host
> and asked adventurers across his river.

He sold them his land, but when they tried to take his spiritual freedom, too, moved south and west and died in the wilderness,

> his books burned, and his own book lost for ever—
> for he had a library, and he was writing a Book.

This half-fabulous figure has met at last a poet in search of a myth. Mr. Aiken has made of him and his successors a kind of American scholar gipsy, of epic rather than elegiac status, a transatlantic Coriolanus, who once in every generation cries to the Mob, "I banish you," and carries his divine spark to the ever-receding wilds. The chief metre of his magnificent poem is the loose anapaestic couplet of the old cowboy lyric:

> O when I die will you bury me
> Where coyotes howl on the lone prairie.

Plucking astonishingly lovely twangs from his bunkhouse guitar, he tracks the Kid through space and time, over the primeval American scene,

> the watergap crossed, the chinquapins gone,
> breasthigh laurel, and still heading on.

There is not too much, be reassured, of the chinquapins (a "native dwarf chestnut"). Mr. Aiken uses his Indianised vocabulary with tact and success, as a device for excluding the White Man from his virgin landscape. He admits no human figure but the Kid himself, and even He is seen only in the branch still swaying from his passage, or by

> prairie-dog cities swarming in the sun,
> golden in the evening, and then not one.

And so a lonely beauty is created, in accordance with Mallarmé's definition, "a virginal absence dispersed in solitude," and with something of Mallarmé's method. The shadowy record of the Kid, traced through frontiersmen physical and spiritual, stops with Captain Ahab—wisely, for the last Kid was Dillinger, and there will never be another in this civilisation.

Having "promised something great" for a matter of forty years, Mr. Aiken has seen his moment come. His own intense pleasure, his sense of (at last) inspiration and power, are communicated. *The Kid* is the kind of poem Melville might have created if he had remained in sight of the magic mountain Greylock, where he wrote *Moby Dick*—if he had not been desiccated by Palestine and written *Clarel*; and it will live as one of the finest pieces of indigenous American poetry since Whitman.

A volume of poems by Mr. Cummings resembles a sheaf of rockets. Each describes its unexpected but inevitable parabola, and never fails to go off. One's pleasure lies in awaiting the detonation, never knowing whether it will release coloured balls of fire or a covey of those exhilarating flares which utter sometimes birdlike flutings, and sometimes rude noises. Here is a fireball:

> slow tottering visions bigly
> come crashing into go
> (all than were never ugly
> beautiful most is now)

and here is a birdsong:

> it's over a (see just
> over this) wall
> the apples are (yes
> they're gravensteins) all
> as red as to lose
> and as round as to find.

I like the rude noises best of all, but I had better not quote one. Mr. Cummings' manner has never lost its brilliance of the early twenties, nor yet has his wit. The thing becomes a bazooka in his hand, and instantly blows its target to blazes. Take:

> and he kissed the general menedjerr
> and they smoked a robert burns cigerr
> to the god of things as they err—

or this minute epigram, which spreads its concentric circles till it bursts its apparent subject, and one realises that mr u is You, and therefore Me:

> mr u will not be missed
> who as an anthologist
> sold the many on the few
> not excluding mr u.

But when the poet emerges from behind his iridescent smokescreen of punctuation and satire, he has nothing less banal to say than

> when skies are hanged and oceans drowned
> the single secret will still be man.

Mr. Cummings' matter, as he nears his climacteric, is perhaps, like his own portrait in the frontispiece, getting a little thin on top. But I only mention this unkind suspicion because I firmly believe Mr. Cummings to be the kind of poet who at the age of seventy, like Hardy or Yeats, suddenly begins to write poetry which knocks his own earlier works into cocked hats. Amen.

Mr. Terence Tiller's poems are a Hymn to Intellectual Beauty. How much more concentrated both intellect and beauty have become since Shelley's time—yet, by stuffing that romantic urn with our symbolist commodities, till, perhaps, it begins to crack, have we made anything more of it?—was it ever intended for a receptacle? These poems are absolute perfection—never an image that is forced, never a complexity allowed to get out of hand—but this perfection is, by Mr. Tiller's own superb definition,

> the deathmask of refusal to be more.

Such power and taste and sensibility should not be wasted in a terrain where Rilke and Yeats have left nothing more to be said. To all such carpings, the cogent answer of the poet is, I know, "Not I, but the wind that blows through me"—and yet, if Mr. Tiller's wind should ever change from south-east to south-west, what blossoms and fruit would transform this desert of selfhood! Meanwhile, *Unarm, Eros*, puts him firmly in the

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first ten (perhaps one should say the first eleven) of contemporary poets.

Mr. Milne is placed fourth on the list because his name is not very well known to me (nor, as his publishers complain, to the public in general) —but for the sheer pleasure of reading him, he should have come second to Mr. Aiken. Mr. Milne is an Irishman, and is saturated in Yeats (in his last volume, *Jubilo*, it was Mr. Eliot, who, good cess to him, simply will not cross St. George's Channel), rather as our own young poets, when hanging up to dry, used to exude Auden or Hopkins. But because with Mr. Milne this borrowing is not a matter of printing-off unbacked literary banknotes, but is drawn on a racial fund, it leaves him solvent. He is a complete and mature poet, possesses wit, intelligence and heart, and speaks a language touched with the good hereditary blarney of Joyce and Synge. In consequence, his poems remain alive and whole after many readings, and they are not, like so much verse from the English younger set, mere strings of images, exploding once, like cartridges, and then spent for ever.

GEORGE D. PAINTER

PUSHKIN AND ANDREYEV

Tales of Bielkin. By ALEXANDER PUSHKIN. *Lindsay Drummond.* 5s.

The Seven Who Were Hanged. By LEONID ANDREYEV. *Lindsay Drummond.* 5s.

Three-quarters of a century separate Pushkin from Andreyev and it is hard for us, myopic perhaps in our proximity, not to feel that this was the period in which everything happened. Quietly a civilization shuddered and fell apart; a fissure opened and divided the whole landscape and on the far side there were upright palaces while the near side was ravaged by earthquakes. On the far side was Pushkin, on the near side Andreyev. The metaphor is barbarously simple but this is at least the myth of our time and we live in the shadow of it. To us Pushkin and Goethe are monumental; they built without seismographs; but our constructions are labelled Work in Progress or For the Time Being, Le Cimetière Marin or Le Bateau Ivre, The Waste Land or A La Recherche du Temps Perdu. We build *provisionally* and our shacks or dug-outs are suited to a seismographic territory. Pushkin smilingly accepts the most artificial of conventions, builds with the material readily offered by his time and makes no effort to quarry his own marble. He takes the huzzar, the champagne bottle, the Queen of Spades, the pistol, the carnival mask, and he deftly juggles with the conventional properties. New patterns appear; he whisks the bag of tricks away, sets them up again in a new configuration. Or he can write, when he wishes, a Russian Macbeth, reaching gracefully back into the past and taking what he chooses. The properties, he seems to say, are unimportant; with them I can write tragedy or comedy or farce. And all this adds up not, as we among our earthquakes would suppose, to an intolerable pasticheur but to a great and wise poet. In our own time deftness arouses our ecstatic schadenfreude; with a wicked glee we watch the little pigs build their smug mansions of brick, knowing that the next tremor will bring them tumbling down. The wise pigs go rooting for straws and when they have piled a few together they hang a label on the uncompleted shack to assure us that it is not yet, and may never be, habitable. But Pushkin was deft, not from imprudence or impatience, but because he had solid ground under his feet.

Certainly there had been little external change in Russia during the middle years of the nineteenth century. The serfs had been emancipated, the forces of revolution had grown stronger, but nihilists were treated as Decembrists had been treated before them. It is true that Andreyev lived to see the 1917 revolution, though not to bless it, but his creative years were spent in a police state which is scarcely to be distinguished from the police state of Catherine, Paul and Alexander. It was not the political condition of Russia which had changed but the whole mind and spirit of that Western civilisation to which Russia, however reluctantly, belonged. Tolstoy and Dostoievsky were the saviours who failed to save, and Andreyev was an early product of their failure. Pushkin's values are strangely assured, less questioned, it sometimes seems, than those of his Western peers. Among his properties we find one which recurs in almost every statement he made about human life; it is a property called Honour, a curious and diverse quality which we have chosen to split up into quite separate elements.

We find it hard to conceive that they were ever so closely united, and that there was a long period in which the same word was used for the mere readiness to avenge an insult and for the highest generosity, the noblest self-sacrifice. I am not suggesting that Pushkin was unable to distinguish between the bloodthirsty pride of the duellist, and the self-immolation of the romantic lover; but he accepted the composite picture of the Honourable Man and proved by his death that his acceptance was much more than a literary convention.

Andreyev, as Mr. Stefan Schimanski ably explains in his introduction to this new edition, is wholly representative of the earthquake age. In the desolation he gropes around, eyes blinded by tears, pitifully scrabbling for single straws. Other writers of our time, and Gorki is an example, have stood erect, surveyed the ruined landscape, and built with at least an absolute awareness of their own intentions. But Andreyev is himself a part of the ruins: he lies prone on the earth, or rises only to his knees. "In contemplating monstrosity," Mr. Schimanski quotes Merezhkovsky, "he succumbs to monstrosity. In contemplating chaos, he becomes chaos." And this, of course, is the absolute condemnation of Andreyev as a writer, I mean of that totality of thought and emotion which is associated with his name.

The writer, and only in our age would it be pertinent to insist on this, must be more than his own landscape. If he lives among sewage he must farm it; he must produce a clear and potable fluid. But though Andreyev failed, totally considered, to do this, he did not always fail. And when he was able to raise his face for a moment and to brush away the mist of tears, the very fact that he had lain so long on the ground, pressed his bosom so close to the troubled earth, gave him a new and individual vision of the landscape. *The Seven Who Were Hanged* is the best of his stories and one of the best stories of the century. Literally it is a masterpiece—masterly the sheer skill of narration, masterly the avoidance, in the most perilous territory, of a single false note. This is an event very rare in literature, when emotion is so powerful and so pure that it clothes itself in words with an irresistible, an incorrigible rightness. The artifice seems to be no more than a channel forced by the flood of emotion, the channel through which it could flow with the greatest ease and the greatest effectiveness. And it is rare, I think, to feel in this way that the form of a work is wholly subordinate to the passion, wholly the creature of the passion, yet that the passion has chosen its form with a dispassionate propriety.

This new Russian Literature Library promises to explore many of the lesser-known by-paths of Russian literature, and the list of future publications is most appetising. But these stories of Pushkin scarcely deserved republication; they reveal that master at his most lazy and anecdotal, and really

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these particular patterns of his favourite properties can neither move nor much amuse us. They are as far beneath *The Captain's Daughter* as she is beneath Onegin. The terrible Andreyev story, on the other hand, is an admirable choice but a misleading bedfellow for Bielkin. Andreyev describes the thoughts and emotions of five men and two women from their arrest to their execution. Quite simply he is dealing with the most important thing in the world. His tumultuous compassion makes him for one moment a giant in a desolate world, while the laziness of Pushkin makes him for one moment a pygmy in a world of wearisome formality. But it would be nearer the whole truth to say that Pushkin was the unhampered master of his ordered age, Andreyev the tragic victim of our chaos.

PHILIP TOYNBEE

THE BRAHMIN WORLD

The Lowells and Their Seven Worlds. By FERRIS GREENLET. *Ernest Benn.* 21s.

My Boyhood in a Parsonage. By THOMAS A. LAMONT. *Heinemann.* 12s. 6d.

Despite the fact that we have become used to drawing most of our films, half our plays and many of our books from the United States, it is a well-loved cliché that we in Britain know too little about America. There is therefore an automatic welcome awaiting the new series announced by Messrs. Benn, to be called the American library, and designed to give us an opportunity to learn more about America and her institutions. This perfunctory greeting is so elegantly given by Lord Halifax in his preface to the first volume of the series, that many are likely to feel that they are performing a small act of devotion to the cause of international amity merely by having the book on their shelves.

Yet it is hard to believe that the editors of the series could have chosen a worse subject for the opening salvo in this salute to Anglo-American relations than the history of seven generations of the Lowell family. The Lowells are best known to the American people as the objects of a satirical verse celebrating Boston as :

> The land of the bean and the cod
> Where the Lowells speak only to Cabots
> And the Cabots speak only to God.

And, though the history of these "Brahmin" families is one of the *curiosa* of American history, it is about as good an introduction to the United States as a history of the Dymoke family would be to the United Kingdom.

The author has obviously worked hard and become enthusiastic, not to say infected, with his subject. He is so fascinated by what he describes as "the fateful chemistry of the chromosomes from ancestral inbreedings" that he can even argue *a posteriori* that an early and almost unknown Lowell must have "had simple faith as well as Norman blood." Though this simple faith brought them into conflict with Laud, and so caused their exile to America, Mr. Greenslet is quick to show that the Lowells never quite lost their affection for the mother country. Inevitably Lowells were active in the American rebellion, but when the war broke out again in 1812, John Lowell was a leading proponent of friendship with Britain. A contemporary observer attributed this to an utter detestation of the French Revolution and its libertarian doctrines and a hope that Britain might curb them.

All the 19th-century Lowells seem to have been equally friendly to Britain, and for the same reason—that they thought it a model of middle-class society, without any of the egalitarian nonsense which was being talked in the United States. We can enliven our reading of the chapters which describe in such detail how the Lowells amassed their wealth by noting parenthetically that at the same time they became more conservative and more pro-British. The climax of this trend was James Russell Lowell—the author of the *Bigelow Papers*—who became in his old age the American Ambassador to London. Mr. Greenslet finds much to praise in his tour of duty: "at the unveiling of memorial tablets," he writes, "no man in England surpassed him"; and again, "no American ever saw the inside of so many English houses, or was more eagerly listened to across the dining tables of Belgravia and Mayfair." It is even touchingly recorded that in the hour of his death he fell into a delirium in which "he fancied he was entertaining royal personages."

Such Americans so described have no appeal on either side of the Atlantic to-day. Their fellow countrymen regard them as toadies of the British aristocracy; the British know that they ceased to be our friends when we ceased to be a bulwark of conservatism. It is perhaps fitting that the last of the seven generations of Lowells described, should be President Lawrence Lowell, whose great work "in selling education to Harvard College," will be forgotten by many who remember his part in the judicial murder of Saccho and Vanzetti.

If we have to learn to love America through her millionaires, many Englishmen will prefer the life of Thomas Lamont, who attributes his rise to fame as senior partner of Morgan's Bank to his boyhood in a parsonage. By far the best part of the book consists of the letters young Tom wrote home when he was at school. Indeed a comparison of the styles of Lamont aged 10 and aged 70, reveals how completely a natural aptitude can be destroyed by disuse.

Many of these letters sound like illustrative footnotes to Professor Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*; for instance:

> The Prep class have adopted a class motto. It is "Laborando perficies" which means "work tells." The class do not like the motto much. The text this morning was in 2 Timothy 2 chapter and I could not hear the verse. It was about snares anyway.

But the letters also reveal that the reason for Lamont's love for Britain was that he was brought up on British books, so easily available in America—without benefit of copyright—in his childhood. All his early journeys to England were pilgrimages to the land of Scott, Dickens, Shakespeare and Chaucer. In 1946 Lamont presented $250,000 to Canterbury Cathedral. The Board of Trade should be asked to note this example of the dollar value of books as exports.

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Week-end Competitions

No. 945

Set by Sebastian

The usual prizes are offered for a Chestertonian poem on the Nationalisation of Gas. Twelve lines. Entries by April 6.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 942

Set by Thomas Smallbones

The usual prizes are offered for a dialogue in rhymed verse between two March Hares surveying the human scene. Limit 12 lines.

Report by Thomas Smallbones

Most of the hares were distressingly sane; the prevailing wind that blew through the competition was the current war-scare; and that, no doubt, sobered them. Too many competitors failed to make any use of the dialogue form, no movement and little characterisation even among the winners. Among the runners-up were C. M. Hibbert who opened:

"Say, what are these people doing?"
"Queuing, so's to queue for queuing."

Yorick, whose hares suggested:

"Heredity you mean? That's whats the matter?"
"Sure! They're all the children of that Hatter."

Bert Lank with another Joycean piece: T. D. MacEwan: E. M., J. J. Curle, and Diablotin. I suggest one guinea each for the first four entries printed and half a guinea for the last two.

A. This Marshall plan's a piece of cake.
B. A piece of cake?
A. A piece of cake!
B. I don't much like a piece of cake, it tastes so washy-wishy. It's all a game of put and take.
A. Of put and take?
B. Of put and take!
A. But don't you think that put and take, as game, is rather fishy?
B. The atmosphere grows Arcticer.
A. Grows Arcticer?
B. And Arcticer!
A. Well, Latins must grow Arcticer with Chile in their cranium. They all adore Antartica.
B. Antartica?
A. Antartica!
B. Of course it's spelt Antartica, but it's pronounced Uranium!
A. World politics are deadly dull.
B. Are deadly dull?
A. Are deadly dull!
B. I quite agree they're deadly—dull is not what I should name them. These humans are not hard to gull.
A. Not hard to gull?
B. Not hard to gull!
A. No lunatics are hard to gull—poor devils, who can blame them? S. W. HYDE

"It's a hungry world," said the First March Hare,
"And life's gone into the gutter:
Doesn't it fill you with utter despair?"
"Utter!"
"What's to be done," asked the Second Hare,
"Ere Peace goes out on a shutter?
From her weary wings there isn't a bare
Flutter."
"Though Goering's dead, and his guns at rest,
There are others that make folks mutter . . ."
"Let's both ask UNO to give 'em the best
Butter!" GUY INNES

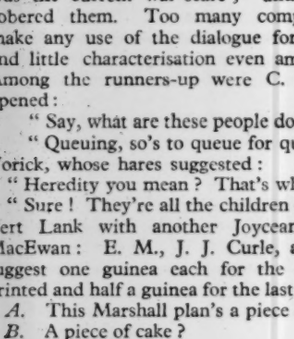
The Lean March Hare. Grumsquabbling motorismuslosen
Boojeering flatfoetidly
Bustanding unseatedly
Irksick me by the couponless dozen.
The Fat March Hare. Whimsmilingly myself find abusing
Skyprices for rabbit fodder,
Shopnation interswindle odder,
Public dumprubbished, no refusing.
The L.M.H. Homburgomastering city bagnates
Meseem uncleanicle impotentates.
The F.M.H. Hushush, eyefullize the Newoo Look
Onscraggering, bumshushly uptook.
L. G. UDALL

Haigha. I'm from my usual Tea-Party. And You?
Heigho. From mine—no doubt the maddest of the two.
Haigha. How so?
Heigho. No Sandwiches. We all ate Hay.
The World being Two, we tried to find a way
To make a marriage for her; or define
Where, if it must be, lies the sundering line;
But raised that feud, Lion and Unicorn,
A feud recurrent since Crowns first were worn.
So, we outlawed each other.
Haigha. Well, good Lad,
You may be, as I may be, rather mad,
But not so mad as these. They never saw
That they should outlaw, not themselves, but War? SILVIA TATHAM

Dialogue between Dippius and Pottius, two March Hares visiting the Zoological Gardens.

Dippius. Oh look! A little Britisher, so clean his fur and nice is,
Working his revolving cage as he chases prices!
Pottius. Slavic States I think! They're having strictly party larks
As Keeper Stalin pipes for them a Melody from Marx.
D. Western Democracies wont breed for Keeper Reason.
P. Keeper Fear is teaching them to use the Mating Season
D. Who's that Keeper being mauled by Arab and by Jew?
P. It's U.N. Joe who brought them in some nice Partition Stew.
D. I could stand for hours and watch their entertaining rages
When they fail to grab the food from other humans' cages.
P. What's that notice on the wall?
D. On the appointed day Zoo will be closed for ever.
Signed—R.S.P.C.A. A. W.

First M.H. Our harmless games are giving me the hump:
These two-legg'd gods don't hop and skip and jump.
Second M.H. Me too. Our madness misses every time
Because we've never addled it with crime.
First M.H. (gloomily). We're amateurs: if we were not, we'd try
To kill ourselves by millions from the sky;
Then, having wasted all our wealth in war
We'd pause to think what next we should fight for.
Second M.H. Too true; and we'd sing patriotic songs
To stir our peaceful blood with fancied wrongs.
First M.H. (resignedly). We cannot match, who'd but one month unsound,
The glorious madness of a whole year round. ALLAN M. LAING



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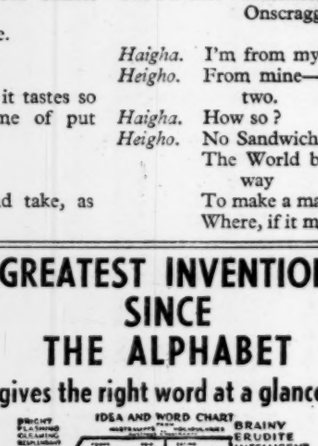

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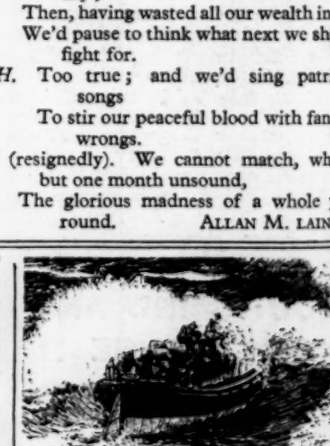

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DURHAM. The University, Durham Division, Board of Extra-Mural Studies. Council of Durham Colleges invites applics. for post of Staff Tutor for Extra-Mural classes. Sal. scale £450, rising by annual increments of £25 to max. of £700 (with the benefits of the F.S.S.U.). Candidates should offer one or two of the following subjects: Economics, International Affairs, Psychology. Applics. to include names of 3 refs. and to be sent by April 17 to the undersigned, from whom further partics. obtainable. S. Holgate, Secretary, 38 North Bailey, Durham.

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B.B.C. invites applics. for Portuguese typist. Shift duties including night work. Thorough knowl. of Portuguese and first-class typing ability essential. General secretarial training useful. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, Broadcasting Hse. W.1, marked "Portuguese Typist, N. Stm.," within 7 days. For acknowledgement enclose s.a.e.

L.C.C. Psychiatric Social Worker reqd. at Cane Hill hospital (for nervous and mental disorders), Coulsdon, Surrey. Exp. essential. Candidates pref. should hold Mental Health Certificate of London School of Economics or equiv. qualification and will be reqd. to co-operate with medical staff in investigating history of mental cases and supervising social welfare of patients. Salary scale £376, rising to £530 p.a. comm. salary according to exp.). For applic. form, send s.a. foolscap env. to Med. Officer of Health (MHS/B), County Hall, Westminster Bridge, S.E.1. (432.)

NATIONAL Association for Mental Health. Experienced Mental Health Worker reqd. immediately in the Social Services Dept. of the Association. Varied exp. essential particularly with administration of the Mental Deficiency Acts, and the special needs of defectives. Duties include advice on cases placed on guardianship or on licence, advising relatives of defectives, visiting special cases, maintaining contact with Homes and Institutions. Salary £400-£450 according to qualifics. and exp. Applics. to Social Services Department, National Assoc. for Mental Health, 39 Queen Anne St. Wimpole St. W.1.

HANDICRAFTS Tutor (woman) reqd. for Educ. Settlement in S. Wales. Exp. with women's Clubs desirable. Salary £250-£350 according to qualifics. and exp. Reply to Warden, Oxford House Educational Settlement, Risca, Mon.

Appointments Vacant—continued

NATIONAL Association for Mental Health. Qualified Social Worker reqd. immediately for social work in connection with Association's Homes, Holiday Homes, and Agricultural Hostels (for men on licence from Certified Institutions). Duties include dealing with admission and discharges, allocations of vacancies, transfers, holidays, etc. Some visiting of Homes and of cases on licence, involving occasional absences from London. Sal. £375-£450 according to qualifics. and exp. Applics. to Homes & Hostels Dept., National Assoc. for Mental Health, 39 Queen Anne St, Wimpole St. W.1.

B.B.C. invites applics. from men only for post of Outside Broadcasting Assistant, Northern Ireland. Duties will consist of organising and production of all Outside Broadcasts, including all sporting, theatre, features, social and public events of every kind. All-round education is essential, together with an ability to get on with people in all walks of life. Ability to speak at the microphone is essential and a knowl. of Northern Ireland is desirable. Sal. is on a scale rising by annual increments of £40 to a max. of £890 p.a. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, Broadcasting Hse. W.1, marked "O.B. Assistant, Northern Ireland, N. Stm.," within 7 days. For acknowl. enclose s.a.e

BRISTOL Royal Hospital. Applics. invited for post of Assistant Warden in the Nurses' Homes. Pref. will be given to candidates with either a Univ. Degree or Social Science Diploma or exp. of quarters' work in the Services. Duties include responsibility for accomm. and assistance with recreational and social activities. Salary at rate of £250 p.a. rising by annual increments of £10 to £300 with residence and superannuation. 28 days' annual holiday. Applics., accompanied by copies of 2 recent testimonials and names of 2 refs., should be sent to Miss B. Appleton, Senior Warden, Infirmary Branch, Bristol, 2.

CALDECOTT Community. Wanted in April, active young Housemistress between the age of 25 and 35 (no teaching) for a group of girls from 12 to 15 years old. Pref. given to someone with exp. of Youth Welfare Work. Must be interested in adolescent problems and prepared to take an active share in the life of the Community. Sal. £200 p.a., resident. Either music, craft or games an advantage. Apply Miss Rendel, Caldecott Community, Mersham le Hatch, Ashford, Kent.

L.C.C. Resident Assistant Domestic Bursar (woman) reqd. immediately at Furzedown Training College, Welham Rd. S.W.17. Post is exempt from Control of Engagement Order, 1947. Training and exp. in institutional management desirable. Assistant Bursar will be responsible for management, including catering and supervision of domestic staff, of hostel for 50 women students. Annual sal. £210, rising by annual increments of £15 to £255 p.a., plus tax-free emoluments of board, lodging and laundry. Apply in writing to Principal at College, stating age, qualifics. and exp., and enclosing copies of recent testimonials. (476.)

VACANCIES for masters and mistresses in all subjects at new departments of boarding school on borders of Wales. Resident posts for men and women prepared to teach boys individually in groups of less than six at any time. Good conditions. Send full particulars of your record and exp. to Box No. 27, John Hart & Co., 22 Northumberland Ave. Charing Cross, London, W.C.2.

L.C.C. Reqd. at Wanstead Hse. Residential School for delicate boys (younger primary age), Margate, 2 Resident Assistant Mistresses. Qualifics. in music, handwork and nature study desirable. Sal., Burnham Scale, plus 2 increments carried beyond the max. Emoluments of board, lodging, washing and medical attendance in consideration of supervisory and extraneous duties outside school hrs. & at wk.-ends. Applic. forms (s.a.e. nec.) from Educ. Officer (T.S.5), County Hall, S.E.1, returnable by Apr. 10. Canvassing disqualifies. (481.)

L.C.C. Reqd. at Bowden House Residential School for delicate boys (older primary age), East Blatchington, Nr. Seaford, Sussex, Resident Assistant Masters (Single quarters). Qualifics. in music, handicrafts, physical training and gardening desirable. Sal., Burnham Scale, plus 2 increments carried beyond max. Emoluments of board, lodging, washing and medical attendance, in consideration of supervisory and extraneous duties outside school hrs. & at wk.-ends. Applic. forms (s.a.e. necessary) from Education Officer (T.S.5), County Hall, S.E.1, returnable by April 10. Canvassing disqualifies. (483.)

L.C.C. Reqd. at Wainwright Home for delicate children, Broadstairs, Kent, Resident Assistant Mistress for infant girls. Knowl. of music desirable. Sal., Burnham scale, plus 2 increments carried beyond max. It is probable that post will carry an allowance over and above scale sal. Emoluments of board, lodging, washing and medical attendance in consideration of supervisory and extraneous duties outside school hrs. and at week-ends. Applic. forms (s.a.e. necessary) from Education Officer (T.S.5), County Hall, S.E.1, returnable by April 10. Canvassing disqualifies. (482.)

FRENCH Teacher reqd. Sept., exp. Dalton method advantage, for children aged 11, to Matric. standard. Other subjects pref. Hist. and Geog. to middle forms. Resident post. Married candidates considered. Apply, Directors, Long Dene School, Ltd., Chiddingstone, Edenbridge, Kent.

WANTED, end April, kindergarten teacher for small group. J. M. Aitkenhead, Kilquhanity House, Castle Douglas, Scotland.

ORGANISER for Workers' Educational Association, North of Scotland. Must have exp. in organising and knowledge of W.E.A. work. Salary £400 p.a. Apply W.E.A., 24 Adelphi, Aberdeen, by April 10.

Appointments Vacant—continued

ASSISTANT Matron, experienced, required for Rudolf Steiner co-educational school hostel in beautiful countryside near London. 33 boarders. Vegetarian diet. Some nursing experience advantageous. Apply Secretary, Priarswood Hostel, Kings Langley, Herts.

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WOMAN Graduate, 27, linguist, newspaper experience, seeks journalistic work London, but out of secretarial rut; bias fashions, films, literary; anything but sport acceptable, providing scope advancement. Box 2040.

CAPABLE and efficient widow, with two daughters at boarding school, London B.A., English & Latin, trained, expd. teacher, domesticated, and with wide interests, seeks post that will provide accommodation and for children in holidays. Box 2045.

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BACHELOR Gentleman, 40, offers services in light secretarial capacity. Box 2069.

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TEMPORARY occupation required April 12-30, August 9-Sept. 18, by Schoolmaster (30). Offers and suggestions to Box 2256.

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Personal

HAMPSTEAD lady with failing sight offers furnished or unfurn. accom. in exchange some help and companionship. Box 2725.

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A.S.S.E.T.—The progressive trade union appeals to readers in supervisory or technical posts to join. Full details supplied on request to: The Association of Supervisory Staffs, Executives & Technicians, 110 Park St. London, W.1. Tel: Mayfair 8541/2.

Personal—continued

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EMIGRATING? Read Abberley's "Manual for Emigrants," entire field, 8s. 6d., & "Chase Me a Kiwi: A Portrait of New Zealand." 12s. 6d. Tantivy Press, Malvern.

COMMUNIST Review. April issue, 6d. Czechoslovakia on the Road to Socialism; Chartism in 1848; China's Agrarian Reform; Strategy & Tactics of Planning; The "New Look" Imperialism. From prog. bookshops/ Central Books, 2, Parton St. W.C.1.

CONTEMPORARY Lithographs — Paul Nash's "Landscape with Megaliths," a few copies available £2 4s. 7d. each. Frames made to order. Turnstile Press, 10 Gt. Turnstile, W.C.1. (Not Saturdays.)

NEW Life, Jewish Pictorial, 1s. 6d. April issue includes Story of Passover; Whitechapel Way; Eistenstein "In Memoriam"; etc. From Senior Press Ltd., 37 Gray's Inn Rd. London, W.C.1

Scholarships

GORDONSTOUN School. Entrance Scholarships. Not more than 12 and not less than 5 scholarships for boys are offered for award in 1948 by the Gordonstoun Society. They vary in value from £30 to £135 p.a., according to requirements of parents. At least one will be reserved as a Nautical Scholarship for a boy wishing to join Nautical Dept. at Gordonstoun with a view to entering Royal Navy or Merchant Service. Candidates, who must be between 13 and 14½ on Sept. 1, 1948, are required to sit for a qualifying exam. at their schools on June 21, 22, and 23. Those who pass will be summoned to an oral exam. at Gordonstoun on July 27 and 28. Closing date for entrance June 7. Further partics. from Director of Studies, Gordonstoun, Elgin.